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THE WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

VOL. IV.

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THE

WRITINGS

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON;

BEING HIS

CORRESPONDENCE, ADDRESSES, MESSAGES, AND OTHER

PAPERS, OFFICIAL AND PRIVATE,

SELECTED AND PUBLISHED FROM THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPTS;

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

NOTES, AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

By JARED SPARKS.

VOLUME IV.

BOSTON:
FERDINAND ANDREWS, PUBLISHER.

1839.

E.a.

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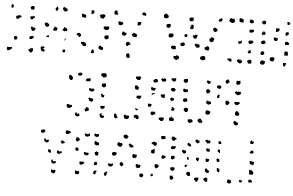

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PART SECOND

(CONTINUED);

COMPRISING

CORRESPONDENCE

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

RELATING TO

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

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CORRESPONDENCE

AND

MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS

RELATING TO

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

New York, 15 July, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

Enclosed you will receive a letter from Congress, which came to hand this morning, with a copy of resolves, to which you will give your attention, as their execution will be under your direction. I have also enclosed a letter for General Burgoyne, which I request you to seal and forward to him, as soon as you have perused the important and necessary resolves it contains. The spirited measures, which Congress have entered into, I hope will make the British troops more regardful that the faith, which ought to be preserved inviolate between nations, and the rights of humanity, may not be violated in future. *

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* These proceedings of Congress related to the affair of the Cedars, where several American prisoners were killed and others plundered by the savages after the capitulation, and where the British officer commanding had used very unjustifiable means to procure hostages for ratifying a

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Admiral Howe arrived on Friday last, and we hourly expect his fleet. The same day, just before he came in, two ships of war, one of forty and the other of twenty guns, and three tenders, passed our batteries without any certain damage that I could perceive, though an incessant fire was kept up. They availed themselves of a brisk and favorable wind and tide. Our last intelligence is, that they are in Tappan Bay. You may readily conjecture a variety of bad purposes intended by this manœuvre. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 15 July, 1776.

SIR,

This will be handed to you by Mr. Griffin, who has also taken upon him the charge and delivery of two packets containing sundry letters, which were sent to Amboy yesterday by a flag, and forwarded to me to-day by General Mercer. The letter addressed to Governor Franklin came open to my hands.*

I was this morning honored with yours of the 13th

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treaty of exchange, by affirming that all the prisoners in his hands would be murdered unless these were granted on such terms as he dictated. His apology was, that he had not power to control the savages; but this was deemed a mere pretence, and the act was regarded with great indignation by Congress and the public generally. Congress examined the matter, and published a detailed report, threatening the severest retaliation, if a similar conduct should be repeated. This report was sent by their order to General Howe and General Burgoyne, the latter of whom was then in Canada. — See *Journals of Congress, July 10th.*

* These papers contained Lord Howe's declaration of the appointment of himself and his brother as commissioners from the King for granting free and general pardons, and a letter to Governor Franklin requesting him to give publicity to the said declaration in New Jersey.

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instant, with its important and necessary enclosures; and, in obedience to the commands of Congress, I have transmitted to General Howe the resolves intended for him. Those for General Burgoyne I enclosed and sent to General Schuyler, with directions immediately to forward them to him.

The inhuman treatment of the whole, and murder of part, of our people, after their surrender and capitulation, was certainly a flagrant violation of that faith, which ought to be held sacred by all civilized nations, and was founded in the most savage barbarity. It highly deserved the severest reprobation; and I trust the spirited measures Congress have adopted upon the occasion will prevent the like in future; but if they should not, and the claims of humanity are disregarded, justice and policy will require recourse to be had to the law of retaliation, however abhorrent and disagreeable to our nature in cases of torture and capital punishments.

July 17*th*. — The Connecticut light-horse, mentioned in my letter of the 11th, notwithstanding their then promise to continue here for the defence of this place, are now discharged, and about to return home, having peremptorily refused all kind of fatigue duty, or even to mount guard, claiming an exemption as troopers. Though their assistance is much needed, and might be of essential service in case of an attack, yet I judged it advisable, on their application and claim of such indulgences, to discharge them; as granting them would set an example to others, and might produce many ill consequences.

The retreat from Crown Point seems to be considered in opposite views by the general and field officers. The former, I am satisfied, have weighed the matter well; and yet the reasons assigned by the latter against it ap-

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pear strong and forcible. I hope whatever is done will be for the best.

I was apprehensive the appointment of General Gates over General Sullivan would give the latter disgust. His letter, which I transmitted to Congress, seemed to warrant the suspicion. He is not arrived yet; when he does, I shall try to settle the affair and prevail on him to continue, as I think his resignation will take from the service a useful and good officer.*

Yesterday evening a flag came from General Howe with a letter addressed to "*George Washington, Esq., &c. &c. &c.*" It was not received, on the same principle that the one from Lord Howe was refused.†

I have the honor to be, &c.

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* General Gates was at first appointed adjutant-general with the rank of brigadier. At the same time General Sullivan was appointed brigadier in the line of the army, which seems to have been considered a superior rank; and Gates had recently been promoted over Sullivan to the rank of major-general. The latter wrote on the subject from Crown Point to General Schuyler as follows. — "I ever was desirous, that some officer superior in rank should relieve me from this disagreeable command, and should with pleasure have remained in the army and served under him; but, Congress having thought proper to supersede me by appointing General Gates, who had not, by the rank they were pleased formerly to confer upon us, the same pretensions as myself, I can construe this in no other light, than to suppose Congress were apprehensive that I was not equal to the trust they were pleased to repose in me. If this be the case, I am bound in justice to my country to relinquish a command to which I am not equal. If this was not the foundation, and they had not such an opinion of me, surely my honor calls upon me to leave the service, after a person is put over me without any impeachment of my conduct." — *MS. Letter, July 6th.* General Sullivan went to Philadelphia, and tendered to the Congress his resignation; but after the reasons for promoting General Gates were explained to him by the President, he asked leave to withdraw his application to resign, which was granted, and he continued in the army.

† General Howe gave the following account of this matter in a letter to Lord George Germain, dated August 6th; —

"The Commander-in-chief of the rebel forces sent me the enclosed letter and narrative of some past transactions in Canada, which I thought

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

New York, 17 July, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

As to the propriety or impropriety of giving up Crown Point, and vacating that post, it is impossible for me to determine. My ignorance of the country, my unacquaintance with its situation, and a variety of circumstances, will not permit me to pronounce any certain opinion upon the subject, or to declare whether it might or could not be maintained against the enemy. I doubt not, that the measure was duly weighed by the general officers in council, and seemed to them best calculated to secure the colonies and prevent the enemy from penetrating into them. However, I cannot but observe, — though I do not mean to encourage in the smallest degree, or to give the least sanction to inferior officers, to set up their opinions against the proceedings and councils of their superiors, knowing the dangerous tendency of such a practice, — that the reasons assigned by the officers in their remonstrance appear to me forcible and of great weight. They coincide with my own ideas. I have ever understood Crown Point to be an important post, and, from its situation, of the utmost consequence to us, especially if we mean to keep the superiority and mastery of the Lake. If it is abandoned by us, it is

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proper to answer in general terms, directing to '*George Washington, Esq., &c. &c. &c.*' as the most unexceptionable mode of address. The officer sent to receive the flag would not receive my letter, as it did not express his General's titles. In consequence of which I sent Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, adjutant-general, a few days afterwards to remonstrate upon this, and other circumstances relative to the usage of General Prescott, and several officers in the enemy's possession, and to mention an exchange of prisoners. This interview was more polite than interesting. However, it induced me to change my superscription for the attainment of an end so desirable; and in this view I flatter myself it will not be disapproved."

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natural to suppose the enemy will possess it. If they do, and my judgment does not mislead me, any vessels or galleys we employ upon the Lake will certainly be in their rear, and it will not be in our power to bring them down to Ticonderoga, or the post opposite to it, or from thence to have the least communication with them, or the means of granting them succours or supplies of any kind. Perhaps it is intended to employ the galleys only on the communication between the two posts, that of Crown Point and the one now to be established. How far they would there answer our views I cannot tell. As I said before, I have not a sufficient knowledge of the several posts, or of the neighbouring country, to form an accurate judgment upon the matter, and of consequence do not design any thing I have said by way of direction, trusting that whatever is best to advance the interest of the important struggle we are engaged in will be done.*

I am extremely sorry to have such unfavorable accounts of the condition of the army. Sickness of itself is sufficiently bad; but when discord and disorder are added, greater misfortunes cannot befall it, except that of a defeat. I must entreat your attention to these mat-

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* In a council of officers, consisting of Schuyler, Gates, Sullivan, Arnold, and Woedtke, convened at Crown Point, July 7th, it was resolved, that the post was not tenable, and that the army should retire to the strong ground opposite Ticonderoga, afterwards called *Mount Independence.* A remonstrance against this decision was drawn up, and signed by twenty-one of the inferior officers, at the head of whom were Colonels Stark, Poor, and Maxwell.

The Baron de Woedtke, mentioned above, had been for many years an officer in the army of the King of Prussia, and had risen to the rank of major. Coming to Philadelphia with strong letters of recommendation to Dr. Franklin from persons of eminence in Paris, he was appointed by Congress a brigadier-general on the 16th of March, and ordered to Canada. He died at Lake George, about three weeks after the above council was held at Crown Point, and was buried with the honors due to his rank.

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ters, and your exertions to introduce more discipline, and to do away the unhappy and pernicious distinctions and jealousies between the troops of different governments. Enjoin this upon the officers, and let them inculcate, and press home to the soldiery, the necessity of order and harmony among those, who are embarked in one common cause, and mutually contending for all that freemen hold dear. I am persuaded, if the officers will but exert themselves, that these animosities and disorders will in a great measure subside; and nothing being more essential to the service, than that they should, I hope nothing on their part will be wanting to effect it.

I am in hopes that, in consequence of your application, the different governments will take some steps for apprehending deserters. It is a growing evil, and I wish it may be remedied. From the northern army they have been extremely numerous, and they should most certainly be returned if they can be found. How far the mode suggested by you may answer, the event will show; but I am doubtful whether many will return of themselves. I am, &c.

TO THE NEW YORK CONVENTION.

Head-Quarters, New York, 17 July, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

Your letter of the 15th instant, covering the resolution of the same date, was duly received, which I beg leave to say was noble, and does honor to your respectable body. It likewise adds a farther proof of your determination to afford me all possible assistance, in discharging the important duties of my office. It is impossible to say *what may be* necessary, but I shall conduct myself as the exigences of the case may require, and I doubt not

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your cheerful aid and assistance will be rendered when called for. I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, with respect and esteem, &c. *

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK.

Head-Quarters, New York, 19 July, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

I enclose you a copy of a resolution of the Convention of the State of New York, dated the 16th instant, recommending it to all the general and sub-committees, to apprehend and secure all those persons, whose going at large, at this critical time, they may deem dangerous to the safety of the State. As this city is hourly threatened with an attack from a powerful enemy, and as there is too much reason to apprehend from their vicinity to this city, and from the number of suspicious characters still in it, that they may receive intelligence, which may counteract all my operations for its defence, I strongly recommend it to you, to remove, for some time, all equivocal and suspicious characters. This appears to me to be the spirit of the resolution of the Provincial Convention; and the propriety of it is founded on the law of self-preservation, and confirmed by the practice of all nations in a state of war.

I esteem it my duty to add my recommendation to that of the Convention, that if, through an ill-timed len-

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* The Convention was now sitting at White Plains. The resolution here referred to was in the words following.—"Resolved unanimously, that it is the opinion of this Convention, that, if his Excellency General Washington should think it expedient for the preservation of this State, and the general interest of America, to abandon the city of New York and withdraw the troops to the north side of Kingsbridge, this Congress will cheerfully coöperate with him in every measure, that may be necessary for that purpose."

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ity, my attempts to secure this province should be baffled, the blame of it may not be imputed to my want of vigilance. I have enclosed a list of persons represented as dangerous. As I can only speak from information, I must rely upon your taking proper steps with them; unless, from your better knowledge, you determine them to be of a different character from that represented.

I am, Gentlemen, &c. *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 19 July, 1776.

SIR,

Enclosed I have the honor to transmit to you copies of a letter and sundry resolutions, which I received yesterday from the Convention of this State.† By them you

* Great vigilance was used in taking up disaffected persons, and such as gave indications of going over to the enemy. General Greene, who was stationed on Long Island, gave the following humorous account of an adventure of this sort under his command. — "I have examined the prisoners, and find them to be a poor parcel of ignorant, cowardly fellows. Two are tailors, and the other two common laborers. They candidly confess, that they set off with an intention of going to Staten Island; not with any intention of joining the enemy, but only to get out of the way of fighting here. There has been a draft amongst the militia to fill the new levies, and it was rumored that these persons were drawn. It was also reported, that they were to go to the northern army, and that almost all that went there either died or were killed. The prospect was so shocking to them, and to their grandmothers and aunts, that I believe they were persuaded to run away. Never did I see fellows more frightened. They wept like children, and appeared exceeding sorrowful. I beg your Excellency's direction how to dispose of them. They do not appear to be acquainted with one public matter. They have been *toryish*; I fancy not from principle, but from its being the prevailing sentiment in the county."

† Resolutions for calling out one fourth part of the militia of the counties of Westchester, Duchess, Ulster, and Orange, for the defence of the State; to be engaged till the last day of December, and each man to receive a bounty of twenty dollars, and Continental pay and subsistence. They were to be stationed in the Highlands, and in the vicinity below, to guard the defiles and prevent incursions of the enemy from Hudson's

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will perceive they have been acting upon matters of great importance, and are exerting themselves in the most vigorous manner to defeat the wicked designs of the enemy, and such disaffected persons as may incline to assist and facilitate their views. In compliance with their request, and on account of the scarcity of money for carrying their salutary views into execution, I have agreed to lend them, out of the small stock now in hand (not more than sixty thousand dollars), twenty thousand dollars, as a part of what they want; which they promise speedily to replace. Had there been money sufficient for paying the whole of our troops and no more, I could not have done it. But as it was otherwise, and by no means proper to pay a part and not the whole, I could not foresee any inconveniences that would attend the loan; on the contrary, that it might contribute in some degree to forward their schemes. I hope my conduct in this instance will not be disapproved.

I enclosed to Governor Trumbull a copy of their letter, and of their several resolves, to-day, by Colonel Broome and Mr. Duer, two members of the Convention, who are going to wait on him; but I did not think myself at liberty to urge or request his interest in forming the camp of six thousand men, as the levies, directed by Congress on the 3d of June to be furnished for the defence of this place by that government, are but little more than one third come in. At the same time, the proposition I think a good one, if it could be carried into execution. In case the enemy should attempt to effect a landing above Kingsbridge, and to cut off the communication between this city and the country, an army to hang on their rear would distress them exceedingly.

I have the honor to be, &c.

River. General Washington was requested to appoint a commander of these levies. He appointed General George Clinton.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES, TICONDEROGA.

New York, 19 July, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I expected ere this to have heard from you; and I will open the correspondence by expressing my exceeding great concern, on account of the determination of your board of general officers to retreat from Crown Point to Ticonderoga, assigning for a reason, contrary to the opinion of all your field-officers, that the former place is not tenable with your present force, or the force expected.

My concern arises from information, and a firm belief, that your relinquishing Crown Point is in its consequence a relinquishment of the Lakes, and all the advantages to be derived therefrom; for it does not admit of a doubt, that the enemy will, if possible, possess themselves of that pass (which is a key to all these colonies), the moment you leave it, and thereby confine your vessels to the narrow part of the Lake in front of that post; or, by having them in the rear, cut off all kind of supplies from them, and all intercourse between them and your camp, securing by this means a free and uninterrupted passage into three of the New England governments.

Nothing but a belief, that you have actually removed the army from Crown Point to Ticonderoga, and demolished the works at the former, and the fear of creating dissensions, and encouraging a spirit of remonstrating against the conduct of superior officers by inferiors, has prevented me, by advice of the general officers, from directing the post at Crown Point to be held, till Congress should decide upon the propriety of its evacuation. As the case stands, I can give no order in the matter, lest between two opinions neither of the places

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should be put into such a posture of defence, as to resist an advancing enemy. I must however express my sorrow at the resolution of your council, and wish that it had never happened, as every body who speaks of it also does, and that the measure could yet be changed with propriety.

We have the enemy full in view; but their operations are to be suspended, till the reinforcement (hourly expected) arrives, when I suppose there will soon be pretty warm work. Lord Howe is arrived. He and the General, his brother, are appointed commissioners to dispense pardons to repenting sinners. My compliments to the gentlemen of my acquaintance, who are with you. I am, dear Sir, &c.*

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* In reply to this letter, after stating the reasons for evacuating Crown Point, General Gates added;—"It would be to the last degree improper to order reinforcements to Crown Point, or even hither, until obliged by the most pressing emergency; as that would only be heaping one hospital upon another. Those troops, when they arrive, are all ordered to halt at Skenesborough. Every thing about this army is infected with the pestilence; the clothes, the blankets, the air, and the ground they walk upon. To put this evil from us, a general hospital is established at Fort George, where there are now between two and three thousand sick, and where every infected person is immediately sent. But this care and caution have not effectually destroyed the disease here; it is notwithstanding continually breaking out.

"Our little fleet already built is equipping under the direction of General Arnold with all the industry, which his activity and good example can inspire. As fast as they are fitted, they are sent to Crown Point, where the sixth battalion of the Pennsylvanians, commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Hartley, is posted. Three hundred men and officers have been drafted from the corps here to man the vessels; one half seamen, the other to act as marines. As soon as all the vessels and gondolas are equipped, General Arnold has offered to go to Crown Point and take the command of them. This is exceedingly pleasing to me, as he has a perfect knowledge of maritime affairs, and is, besides, a most deserving and gallant officer. The command of the water is of the last importance, for should the enemy ever get a naval force superior to ours upon the Lake, the command thereof is theirs, let who will possess Crown Point. As to their penetrating the eastern governments, they may attempt that by Onion River

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 22 July, 1776.

SIR,

When the letter and declaration, from Lord Howe to Mr. Franklin and the other late governors, come to be published, I should suppose the warmest advocates for dependence on the British crown must be silent, and be convinced beyond all possibility of doubt, that all that has been said about the Commissioners was illusory, and calculated expressly to deceive and put off their guard, not only the good people of our own country, but those of the English nation, that were averse to the proceedings of the King and ministry. Hence we see the cause why a specification of their powers was not given to the mayor and city of London, on their address requesting it. That would have been dangerous, because it would then have been manifest, that the line of conduct they were to pursue would be totally variant from that, which

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which empties itself into Missisque Bay, sixty miles below Crown Point." —*MS. Letter, Ticonderoga, July 29th.*

In the same letter General Gates took occasion to reflect in a manner somewhat extraordinary upon the opinions of the general officers in Washington's army. — "I must now take the liberty," he writes, "to animadvert a little upon the unprecedented behaviour of the members of your council to their compeers in this department. They, Sir, having very ample supplies at hand, make no allowance for the misfortunes and wants of this army, nor for the delay and difficulty that attend the procuring of every thing here. Had we a healthy army, four times the number of the enemy, our magazines full, our artillery complete, stores of every kind in profuse abundance, with vast and populous towns and country close at hand to supply our wants, your Excellency would hear no complaints from this army; and the members of your council, our brethren and compeers, would have as little reason then, as they have now, to censure the conduct of those, who are in nothing inferior to themselves."

General Gates had written, July 16th, that since the beginning of May the loss sustained in the northern army from the enemy, and by death and desertion, amounted to more than five thousand men, and that three thousand were then sick.

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they had industriously propagated, and amused the public with. The uniting of the civil and military offices in the same persons, too, must be conclusive to every thinking person, that there is to be but little negotiation of the civil kind.

I have enclosed, for the satisfaction of Congress, the substance of what passed between myself and Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, adjutant-general, at an interview had yesterday in consequence of a request from General Howe the day before; to which I beg leave to refer them for particulars. *

Colonel Knox of the train having often mentioned to me the necessity of having a much more numerous body of artillerists, than what there now is, in case the present contest should continue longer, and knowing the deficiency in this instance, and their extreme usefulness, I desired him to commit his ideas upon the subject to writing, in order that I might transmit them to Congress for their consideration. Agreeably to my request, he has done it; and the propriety of his plan is now submitted for their decision. It is certain, that we have not more at this time than are sufficient for the several extensive posts we now have, including the drafts which he speaks of, and which, I presume, not only from what he has informed me, but from the nature of the thing, can never be qualified to render the same service, as if they were regularly appointed and formed into a corps for that particular purpose.

I beg leave to remind Congress, that some time ago I laid before them the proposals of some persons here for forming a company of light-horse; and the President's answer, a little time after, intimated that the plan seemed to be approved of. As those, who wanted to

* See APPENDIX, No. I.

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make up the troop, are frequently pressing me for an answer, I could wish to be favored with the decision of Congress upon the subject.

By a letter from General Schuyler, of the 14th instant, dated at Albany, he informs me, that, the day before, some desperate designs of the Tories in that quarter had been discovered, the particulars of which he could not divulge, being under an oath of secrecy; however, that such measures had been taken, as to promise a prevention of the intended mischief; and that four of the conspirators, among them a ringleader, were apprehended about one o'clock that morning, not far from the town. What the plot was, or who were concerned in it, is a matter I am ignorant of as yet. With my best regards to Congress, I have the honor to be your and their most obedient servant.

P. S. Congress will please to observe what was proposed respecting the exchange of Mr. Lovell, and signify their pleasure in your next.*

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* *From the Orderly Book, July 21st.* — "The General has great pleasure in communicating to the officers and soldiers of this army the signal success of the American arms under General Lee in South Carolina. This glorious example of our troops, under the like circumstances with us, the General hopes will animate every officer and soldier to imitate and even outdo them, when the enemy shall make the same attempt on us. With such a bright example before us of what can be done by brave and spirited men fighting in defence of their country, we shall be loaded with a double share of shame and infamy, if we do not acquit ourselves with courage, or a determined resolution to conquer or die. With this hope and confidence, the General most earnestly exhorts every officer and soldier to pay the utmost attention to his arms and health; to have the former in the best order for action, and by cleanliness and care to preserve the latter; to be exact in discipline, obedient to superiors, and vigilant on duty. With such preparation and a suitable spirit, there can be no doubt but, by the blessing of Heaven, we shall repel our cruel invaders, preserve our country, and gain the greatest honor."

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TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

New York, 22 July, 1776.

DEAR BROTHER,

Whether you wrote to me last, or I to you, I cannot undertake to say; but as it is some time since a letter has passed between us, and as I expect every hour to be engaged in too busy a scene to allow time for writing private letters, I will take an opportunity by this day's post to address to you a few lines, giving a brief account of the situation of affairs in this quarter.

To begin, then, we have a powerful fleet within full view of us, distant about eight miles. We have General Howe's present army, consisting, by good report, of about eight or nine thousand men upon Staten Island, covered by their ships. We have Lord Howe just arrived, and we have ships now coming in, which we suppose, but do not know, to be part of the fleet with the expected reinforcement. When this arrives, if the reports of deserters, prisoners, and Tories are to be depended upon, the enemy's numbers will amount at least to twenty-five thousand men; ours to about fifteen thousand. More, indeed, are expected, but there is no certainty of their arrival, as harvest and a thousand other excuses are urged as the reasons of delay. What kind of opposition we shall be able to make, time only can show. I can only say, that the men appear to be in good spirits, and, if they will stand by me, the place shall not be carried without some loss, notwithstanding we are not yet in such a posture of defence as I could wish.

Two ships, the Phœnix of forty-four guns, and the Rose of twenty, ran by our batteries on the 12th, exhibiting a proof of what I had long most religiously believed; and that is, that a vessel, with a brisk wind and strong

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tide, cannot, unless by a chance shot, be stopped by a battery, unless you can place some obstruction in the water to impede her motion within reach of your guns. We do not know that these ships received any capital injury. In their rigging they were somewhat damaged, and several shot went through their hulls; but few if any lives were lost. They now, with three tenders which accompanied them, lie up the North or Hudson's River, about forty miles above this place, and have totally cut off all communication, by water, between this city and Albany, and between this army and ours upon the Lakes. They may have had other motives inducing them to run up the river, such as supplying the Tories with arms, and the like; but such a vigilant watch has hitherto been kept upon them, that I fancy they have succeeded but indifferently in those respects, notwithstanding this country abounds in disaffected persons of the most diabolical dispositions and intentions, as you may have perceived by the several publications in the gazettes, relative to their designs of destroying this army by treachery and bribery, which were providentially discovered.

It is the general report of deserters and prisoners, and a prevailing opinion here, that no attempt will be made by General Howe, till his reinforcement arrives, which, as I said before, is hourly expected. Our situation at present, both in regard to men and other matters, is such as not to make it advisable to attempt any thing against them, surrounded as they are by water and covered with ships, lest a miscarriage should be productive of unhappy and fatal consequences. It is provoking, nevertheless, to have them so near, without being able to give them any disturbance. Their ships that passed us are also safely moored in a broad part of the river, out of reach of shot from either shore.

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Mrs. Washington is now at Philadelphia, and has thoughts of returning to Virginia, as there is little or no prospect of her being with me any part of this summer I beg of you to present my love to my sister and the children, and compliments to any inquiring friends, and to do me the justice to believe, that I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 25 July, 1776.

SIR,

Disagreeable as it is to me, and unpleasing as it may be to Congress, to multiply officers, I find myself under the unavoidable necessity of asking an increase of my aids-de-camp. The augmentation of my command, the increase of my correspondence, the orders to give, the instructions to draw, cut out more business than I am able to execute in time with propriety. The business of so many different departments centring with me, and by me to be handed on to Congress for their information, added to the intercourse I am obliged to keep up with the adjacent states, and incidental occurrences, all of which require confidential and not hack writers to execute, renders it impossible, in the present state of things, for my family to discharge the several duties expected of me, with that precision and despatch that I could wish. What will it be, then, when we come into a more active scene, and I am called upon from twenty different places perhaps at the same instant?

Congress will do me the justice to believe, I hope, that it is not my inclination or wish to run the Continent into any unnecessary expense; and those who better know me will not suspect, that show and parade can have any influence on my mind in this instance. A

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conviction of the necessity of it, for the regular discharge of the trust reposed in me, is the governing motive for the application.*

July 27th. — In consequence of my application to Governor Trumbull, he has sent me two row-galleys; and I expect another from him. None from Governor Cooke is yet come; nor have I heard from him on the subject. One is complete here. The fire-ships are going on under Mr. Anderson's direction, but rather slowly;† and I am preparing some obstructions for the channel nearly opposite the works at the upper end of this island. When all things are ready, I intend to try, if it shall seem practicable, to destroy the ships and tenders above, and to employ the galleys, if they can be of advantage. The militia for the Flying Camp come in but slowly. By a return from General Mercer yesterday, they are but little more than three thousand. If they were in, or could be there shortly, and the situation of the enemy remains the same, I would make some efforts to annoy them, keeping our posts here well guarded, and not putting too much to hazard, or in any manner to risk.

July 29th. — In my letter of the 27th, I informed Congress of my views and wishes to attempt something

* On receiving this letter, Congress authorized the Commander-in-chief to appoint an additional aid-de-camp.

† Mr. Anderson had proposed a scheme to Congress for destroying the British fleet in the harbour of New York, and he was recommended to General Washington by the President of that body, with a request that he would facilitate the experiment, in the prospect of which Mr. Anderson was so sanguine, that he professed himself willing to hazard his life in carrying it into execution. He had attempted a similar enterprise against the British vessels in Quebec, and was defeated, as he believed, only by the accident of his being burnt, and by the enemy's getting intelligence of his plan, and taking measures to counteract it. Washington employed him in constructing fire-ships.

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against the troops on Staten Island. I am now to acquaint them, that, by the advice of General Mercer and other officers at Amboy, it will be impracticable to do any thing upon a large scale, for want of craft, as the enemy have the entire command of the water all round the island. I have desired General Mercer to have nine or ten flat-bottomed boats built at Newark Bay and Elizabethtown, with a design principally to keep up the communication across Hackinsac and Passaic Rivers, which I deem a matter of great importance, and extremely necessary to be attended to.* I am, &c.

TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

New York, 29 July, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

At length I have been able to comply with the first part of a resolution of Congress, relative to a return of the vacancies in the several regiments, composing that part of the army under my immediate command. I thought to have made this return much sooner, but the dispersed situation of our troops, the constant duty they

* Several plans were suggested for attacking the enemy on Staten Island. A Council of War decided, that a general attack was inexpedient, but that an attempt might be made by a party from the Jersey shore nearest to the island. The intrepid Major Knowlton, who was stationed at Bergen, was directed to confer with General Mercer on the subject. They determined to make the experiment on the night of the 18th of July, and every thing was got in readiness. Major Knowlton was to head a party of Continental troops, and be supported by others from the Flying Camp under General Mercer, who was to take a part in the enterprise. They marched early in the evening to the point of embarkation, but the weather became so tempestuous, and the waves so high, that it was impossible to cross the river in time to effect the object. Another scheme was projected for an attack from the same quarter, with a body of three thousand nine hundred men, but boats could not be collected sufficient to transport half that number across the water.

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are upon, the difficulty of getting returns when this is the case, especially when those returns are to undergo several corrections, and the variety of important occurrences, which have intervened of late to withdraw attention from this matter, will I hope be admitted as an excuse, and the delay not ascribed to any disinclination in me to comply with the order; as I shall, while I have the honor to remain in the service of the United States, obey to the utmost of my power, and to the best of my abilities, all orders of Congress with a scrupulous exactness. I am sorry to take up so much of your time, as the recital of particular cases requires, but there is no avoiding it, unless Congress will be pleased to appoint one or more persons, in whom they can confide, to visit this part of the army once a month, inspect into it, and fill up the vacancies, as shall appear proper to them upon the spot. This cannot be attended with any great trouble, nor much expense, as it is only in the part of the army under my immediate direction, that such regulations would be necessary; the officers commanding in other departments having this power, I believe, already given them.*

* To this paragraph the President of Congress replied;—"I am particularly instructed by Congress to answer that part of your letter, directed to the Board of War, which relates to the filling up vacancies in the army. The Congress are concerned to find, that an opinion is entertained, that greater confidence has been placed in, and larger powers given to, other commanders in that respect, than to yourself. They have in no instance, except in the late appointment of General Gates to the command in Canada, parted with the power of filling up vacancies. The great confusion and many disorders prevalent in that army, and its distance, induced Congress to lodge such a power in that general for the limited space of three months, and only during his continuance in Canada. Should Congress ever empower its generals to fill up the vacancies in the army, they know of no one in whom they would so soon repose a trust of such importance as in yourself; but future generals may make a bad use of it. The danger of the precedent, not any suspicion of their present Commander-in-chief, prompts them to retain a power, that, by you, Sir, might be exercised with the greatest public advantage."

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I have the honor to enclose a list of the officers of the regiments at this place, and long ago directed the like return to be made from the northern and eastern troops, which I hope is complied with. I also make return of the artillery according to Colonel Knox's report, and of the ordnance and stores, agreeably to the commissary's return. With respect to the regiment of artificers, I have only to observe, that the forming of them into one corps at the time I did, when immediate action was expected, was only intended as a temporary expedient to draw that useful body of near six hundred men into the field, under one head and without confusion. The appointment of officers, therefore, in this instance, was merely nominal, and unattended with expense.

The mode of promotion, whether in a Continental, colonial, or regimental line, being a matter of some consideration and delicacy to determine, I thought it expedient to know the sentiments of the general officers upon the consequences of each, before I offered my own to your board; and I have the honor to inform you, that it is their unanimous opinion, as it is also mine, from observations on the temper and local attachments of each corps to the members thereof, that regimental promotions would be much the most pleasing; but this it is thought had better appear in practice, than come announced as a resolution, and that there ought to be exceptions in favor of extraordinary merit on the one hand, and demerit on the other; the first to be rewarded out of the common course of promotion, whilst the other might stand, and sustain no injury. It is a very difficult matter to step out of the regimental line now, without giving much inquietude to the corps in which it happens. Were it then to be declared, as the resolution of Congress, that all promotions should go in this way without some strong qualifying clauses, it would be al-

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most impossible to do it without creating a mutiny. This is the sense of my officers; as also, that the promotions by succession are not meant to extend to non-commissioned officers, further than circumstances of good behaviour may direct.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, New York, 30 July, 1776.

SIR,

Lieutenant-Colonel Paterson, adjutant-general of the army under your command, at the interview between us, having proposed an exchange of Mr. Lovell for Governor Skene, I am authorized to inform you, that the Congress have not only approved of this proposition, but, judging that a general exchange of prisoners will be attended with mutual convenience and pleasure to both parties, have empowered their commanders in each department to negotiate one, in the following manner; — "Continental officers for those of equal rank either in the land or sea service, soldier for soldier, sailor for sailor, and citizen for citizen." They have also particularly mentioned the exchange of Colonel Ethan Allen for any officer of the same or inferior rank.

You will be pleased to signify the time and place for that of Mr. Lovell and Governor Skene, that I may give direction for the latter to be ready, who is now at Hartford, about one hundred and twenty miles from hence; also to favor me with your sentiments, as well on the proposition respecting Colonel Allen, as on

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the subject of a general exchange. I have the honor to be, with due respect, Sir, your most obedient servant.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

New York, 31 July, 1776

DEAR SIR,

I am extremely happy to find, that you have discovered and apprehended some of the ringleaders of a dangerous plot, which you say was forming in the neighbourhood of Albany; nor do I hear with little pleasure of the harmony and good agreement between you and General Gates, knowing how essential they are to the service.

It gives me great satisfaction to hear, that taking post at Fort Stanwix has not given umbrage to the Indians; and, also, that those, who were at Philadelphia and this place, have returned to their several nations with such favorable ideas of our strength and resources. From this circumstance I hope, that you will be able to engage them in our interest, and, with the assistance of the reward allowed by Congress, to excite their efforts to make prisoners of our enemies. I would have you press the matter strongly in both instances, and though you should not succeed, I flatter myself that you will secure their neutrality. That will be an important point to gain.

I conceive it will not only be proper, but absolutely necessary, to request General Howe to deliver up the officers, who, regardless of their paroles, have escaped from Pennsylvania; and all others, that have acted in

* See the answer to this letter in the APPENDIX, No. II.

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the same manner; pointing out the impropriety of such conduct, and the difficulty it lays us under as to the line of treatment to be observed to others. In a conversation with the adjutant-general of the King's army, I touched upon this subject, and he assured me, that all complaints of this nature would be strictly attended to by General Howe, and those who gave rise to them be handled with severity. Lord Howe, too, I am confidently informed, has expressed his great disapprobation of such behaviour, and said that those who were guilty of it should be severely noticed, if they came into his hands. Every thinking and sensible person must see the impropriety of it, and the consequences that must attend it. I should suppose the requisition will claim General Burgoyne's attention and be readily complied with.

I observe your reasons for quitting Crown Point, and preferring Ticonderoga. My knowledge of the importance of the former was not properly my own; it arose from the information I had from gentlemen and persons, who were, or said they were, well acquainted with Crown Point, and the situation of the country about it. Being founded on that, I cannot say any thing myself on the subject. Your representation of it most certainly lessens its consequence in a capital degree. However, I am fearful that the observation of the field-officers, "that the New England governments will be thereby exposed to the incursions of our cruel and savage enemies," will be but too well verified. If that post could not have been maintained, this evil with others greater must have happened.

All the eastward accounts say, that three or four captures have been made lately; among them a provision vessel from Ireland, which of herself came into Boston harbour. In the southern department we have been

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still more lucky. Sir Peter Parker and his fleet got a severe drubbing in an attack made upon our works on Sullivan's Island, just by Charleston, in South Carolina; a part of their troops at the same time, attempting to land, were repulsed. The papers I presume have reached you announcing this fortunate event, where you will see the particulars as transmitted by General Lee to Congress. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 2 August, 1776.

SIR,

Congress having been pleased to leave with me the direction of Colonel Ward's regiment, I have written to Governor Trumbull, and requested him to order their

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* *From the Orderly Book, August 1st.* — "It is with great concern, that the General understands that jealousies have arisen among the troops from the different provinces, and reflections are frequently thrown out, which can only tend to irritate each other, and injure the noble cause in which we are engaged, and which we ought to support with one hand and one heart. The General most earnestly entreats the officers and soldiers to consider the consequences; that they can no way assist our enemies more effectually, than by making divisions among ourselves; that the honor and success of the army, and the safety of our bleeding country, depend upon harmony and good agreement with each other; that the provinces are all united to oppose the common enemy, and all distinctions sunk in the name of an American. To make this name honorable, and to preserve the liberty of our country, ought to be our only emulation; and he will be the best soldier and the best patriot, who contributes most to this glorious work, whatever his station, or from whatever part of the continent he may come. Let all distinctions of nations, countries, and provinces, therefore, be lost in the generous contest, who shall behave with the most courage against the enemy, and the most kindness and good humor to each other. If there be any officers or soldiers so lost to virtue and a love of their country, as to continue in such practices after this order, the General assures them, and is authorized by Congress to declare to the whole army, that such persons shall be severely punished and dismissed from the service with disgrace."

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march to this place, being fully satisfied that the enemy mean to make their grand push in this quarter, and that the good of the service requires every aid here that can be obtained. I have also written to Colonel Elmore, and directed him to repair hither with his regiment. When it comes I shall fill up commissions for such officers, as appear with their respective companies. Colonel Holman with a regiment from the Massachusetts state has arrived. Colonel Carey from thence is also here, waiting the arrival of his regiment, which he hourly expects. He adds, that when he left New London he heard that the third regiment from Massachusetts was almost ready, and would soon be in motion.

The enemy's force is daily increasing, and becoming stronger by new arrivals. Yesterday, General Greene reports, about forty sail, including tenders, came into the Hook. What they are, or what those have brought that have lately gone in, I remain uninformed. However, I think it probable they are a part of Admiral Howe's fleet with the Hessians. It is time to look for them.* I have the honor to be, &c.

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* The above vessels proved to be from the south. General Clinton and Lord Cornwallis arrived from Carolina on the 1st of August. General Clinton's adventure in that quarter, it would seem, was not very gratifying to his superiors. Lord George Germain wrote to him, August 24th;— "I had reason to flatter myself, that, the season being far advanced, you would not make any attempt at the southward, whereby there could be a possibility of your being prevented from proceeding with your army in due time to the northward to join General Howe, who has long impatiently expected your arrival. I was therefore extremely disappointed and mortified to learn by your letter of July 8th, that you were still in the south, and that the fleet had received a severe check at Sullivan's Island."—*MS. Letter.* General Lee arrived in Charleston on the 4th of June, and took command of the American forces in the southern department. The gallant action at the Fort on Sullivan's Island was fought June 28th, under Colonel Moultrie, by whose name the Fort was afterwards called.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MASSACHUSETTS COUNCIL.

Head-Quarters, 2 August, 1776.

SIR,

Your letter of the 16th ultimo, in behalf of the council of Massachusetts Bay, I have received. The contents have been attended to; and I have the pleasure to inform you, that there is a prospect of an early exchange of the prisoners taken in the Yankee Hero privateer. As Mr. Tracy negotiated this matter, and had an interview with Lord Howe on board the Eagle man-of-war, I must refer you to him for particulars. Congress authorized me to comply with General Howe's request of giving Governor Skene for Mr. Lovell; and I have written informing General Howe thereof, and expect soon to have Mr. Lovell sent to some part of the continent.

Assure the members of your honorable body, that it gives me particular pleasure, that I have it in my power to relieve one of their citizens from a long and tedious imprisonment, and I shall esteem myself happy in complying with any request they may make, consistent with the important duties of my office.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

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* *From the Orderly Book, August 3d.* — "That the troops may have an opportunity of attending public worship, as well as to take some rest after the great fatigue they have gone through, the General in future excuses them from fatigue duty on Sundays, except at the ship-yards, or on special occasions, until further orders. The General is sorry to be informed, that the foolish and wicked practice of profane cursing and swearing, a vice heretofore little known in an American army, is growing into fashion; he hopes the officers will, by example as well as influence, endeavour to check it, and that both they and the men will reflect, that we can have little hope of the blessing of Heaven on our arms, if we insult it by our impiety and folly; added to this, it is a vice so mean and low, without any temptation, that every man of sense and character detests and despises it."

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 5 August, 1776.

SIR,

The mode for the exchange of prisoners, resolved on by Congress, is acceded to by General Howe, so far as it comes within his command. A copy of my letter and his answer upon this subject I have the honor to enclose to you; to which I beg leave to refer Congress.

The enclosed copy of a letter from Colonel Tupper, who had the general command of the galleys here, will inform Congress of the engagement between them and the ships of war up the North River on Saturday evening, and of the damage we sustained. What injury was done to the ships, I cannot ascertain. It is said they were hulled several times by our shot. All accounts agree, that our officers and men, during the whole of the affair, behaved with great spirit and bravery. The damage done to the galleys shows beyond question, that they had a warm time of it. The ships still remain up the river; and, before any thing further can be attempted against them, should it be thought advisable, the galleys must be repaired. I have also transmitted to Congress a copy of a letter I received by Saturday's post from Governor Cooke, to which I refer them for the intelligence it contains. The seizure of our vessels by the Portuguese is, I fear, an event too true. Their dependence upon the British crown for aid against the Spaniards must force them to comply with every thing required of them. I wish the Morris may get safe in with her cargo. As to the ships which Captain Buchlin saw on the 25th ultimo, they have probably arrived, for yesterday twenty-five sail came into the Hook. The hulks and three *chevaux-de-frise*, that have been preparing to obstruct the channel, have got up to the place

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they are intended for, and will be sunk as soon as possible.* I would beg leave to remind Congress of the necessity there is of having some major-generals appointed for this army, the duties of which are great, extensive, and impossible to be discharged as they ought to be, and the good of the service requires, without a competent number of officers of this rank. I mean to write more fully upon the subject; and, as things are drawing fast to an issue, and it is necessary to make every proper disposition and arrangement that we possibly can, I pray that this matter may be taken into consideration, and claim their early attention. I well know what has prevented appointments of this sort for some time past; but the situation of our affairs will not justify longer delays in this instance.

August 7th. — In my letter of the 5th, I begged leave to recall the attention of Congress to the absolute necessity there is for appointing more general officers, promising at the same time, by the first opportunity, to

* The mode of constructing the *chevaux-de-frise* was a contrivance of General Putnam's, as appears by a letter from him to General Gates, dated July 26th. — "The enemy's fleet now lies in the bay very safe, close under Staten Island. Their troops possess no land here but the Island. Is it not very strange, that those invincible troops, who were to destroy and lay waste all this country with their fleets and army, are so fond of islands and peninsulas, and dare not put their feet on the main? But I hope, by the blessing of God and good friends, we shall pay them a visit on their island. For that end, we are preparing fourteen fire-ships to go into their fleet, some of which are ready charged and fitted to sail, and I hope soon to have them all fixed. We are preparing *chevaux-de-frise*, at which we make great despatch by the help of ships, which are to be sunk; a scheme of mine, which you may be assured is very simple, a plan of which I send you. The two ships' sterns lie towards each other, about seventy feet apart. Three large logs, which reach from ship to ship, are fastened to them. The two ships and logs stop the river two hundred and eighty feet. The ships are to be sunk, and, when hauled down on one side, the picks will be raised to a proper height, and they must inevitably stop the river if the enemy will let us sink them." — *MS. Letter.*

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give my sentiments more at large upon the subject. Confident I am, that the postponing of this measure has not proceeded from motives of frugality, otherwise I should take the liberty of attempting to prove, that we put too much to the hazard by such a saving. I am but too well apprized of the difficulties that occur in the choice. They are, I acknowledge, great; but at the same time it must be allowed, that they are of such a nature as to present themselves whenever the subject is thought of. Time, on the one hand, does not remove them; on the other, delay may be productive of fatal consequences. This army, though far short as yet of the numbers intended by Congress, is by much too unwieldy for the command of any one man, without several major-generals to assist. For it is to be observed, that a brigadier-general at the head of his brigade is no more than a colonel at the head of a regiment, except that he acts upon a larger scale. Officers of more general command are at all times wanted for the good order and government of an army, especially when the army is composed chiefly of raw troops; but in an action they are indispensably necessary. At present there is but one major-general for this whole department and the Flying Camp; whereas, at this place alone, less than three cannot discharge the duties with proper regularity.

If these major-generals are appointed, as undoubtedly they will be, out of the present brigadiers, you will want for this place three brigadiers at least. The northern department will require one, if not two, (as General Thompson is a prisoner, and the Baron Woedtke reported to be dead or in a state not much better,) there being at present only one brigadier-general, Arnold, in all that department. For the eastern governments there ought to be one, or a major-general, to superintend the

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regiments there, and to prevent impositions that might otherwise be practised. These make the number wanted to be six or seven; and who are to be appointed, Congress can best judge. To make brigadiers of the oldest colonels would be the least exceptionable way; but it is much to be questioned whether by that mode the ablest men would be appointed to office. And I would observe, though the rank of the colonels of the eastern governments was settled at Cambridge last year, it only respected themselves, and is still open as to officers of other governments. To pick a colonel here and a colonel there through the army, according to the opinion entertained of their abilities, would no doubt be the means of making a better choice, and nominating the fittest persons; but then the senior officers would get disgusted, and, more than probable, with their connexions, quit the service. That might prove fatal at this time. To appoint gentlemen as brigadiers, that have not served in this army, in this part of it at least, would not wound any one in particular, but hurt the whole equally, and must be considered in a very discouraging light by every officer of merit. View the matter, therefore, in any point of light you will, there are inconveniences on the one hand, and difficulties on the other, which ought to be avoided. Would they be remedied by appointing the oldest colonels from each state? If this mode should be thought expedient, the enclosed list gives the names of the colonels from New Hampshire to Pennsylvania inclusive, specifying those who rank first, as I am told, in the several colony lists.

I am, &c.*

* Immediately after receiving this letter, Congress appointed Heath, Spencer, Sullivan, and Greene major-generals; and James Reed, Nixon, St. Clair, McDougall, Parsons, and James Clinton brigadier-generals. See *Journals of Congress, August 9th.*

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TO MAJOR CHRISTOPHER FRENCH.

Head-Quarters, New York, 7 August, 1776.

SIR,

I am to acknowledge the receipt of your favor, intimating your expectations of a release on the 12th of this month. I have considered your parole, advised with those whose knowledge and experience give weight to their opinion, and otherwise endeavoured to inform myself how far your construction of it is founded upon justice, reason, or usage. I do not find it warranted by either. My duty, therefore, obliges me to overrule your claim as a matter of right. As a matter of favor, indulgence is not in my power, even if your line of conduct as a prisoner had been unexceptionable. I have therefore written to the Committee of Hartford, and sent them a copy of this letter, and I hope you will, without difficulty, conform to the regulations already made with respect to prisoners by the general Congress.

It is probable a general exchange of prisoners will soon take place. It will then be a pleasing part of my duty to facilitate your return to your friends and connexions, as, I assure you, it is now a painful one to disappoint you in an expectation, which you seem to have formed in a full persuasion of being right, and in which, on mature deliberation, I am so unhappy as totally to differ from you. I am, Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, New York, 7 August, 1776.

SIR,

By two deserters this day, we have the following intelligence, namely, that General Clinton and Lord Corn-

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wallis, with the whole southern army, have arrived and landed on Staten Island from South Carolina, in number about three or four thousand; that the fleet, which came in a few days since, are the Hessians and Scotch Highlanders, part of twelve thousand, who were left off Newfoundland; in the whole making about thirty thousand men; and that, it is said by the officers of the navy and army, they are to attack New York and Long Island in the course of a week. The uncommon movements of the fleet this day, together with the above intelligence, convince us, that, in all human probability, there can but a very few days pass, before a general engagement takes place. When I consider the weakness of our army by sickness, the great extent of ground we have to defend, and the amazing slowness with which the levies come forward, I think it is absolutely necessary, that the neighbouring militia should be immediately sent to our assistance; and, agreeably to your letter of the 6th of July, I have ordered the colonels with their regiments to march, with all convenient speed, to this place.

The disgrace of the British arms at the southward, and the season being far advanced, will make them exert every nerve against us in this quarter. To trust altogether in the justice of our cause, without our own utmost exertions, would be tempting Providence; and, that you may judge of our situation, I give you the present state of our army.* By this, you will see, we are to oppose an army of thirty thousand experienced veterans, with about one third the number of raw troops, and these scattered some fifteen miles apart. This letter will be handed to you by Mr. Root. To him

* Present fit for duty, 10,514; sick present, 3,039; sick absent, 629; on command, 2,946; on furlough, 97; total, 17,225.

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I must refer you for further particulars; and have the pleasure to be your Honor's most obedient servant.*

TO THE NEW YORK CONVENTION.

New York, 8 August, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

I have been favored with your letter of the 6th instant, and am happy to find the nomination I made of General Clinton, in consequence of your request to appoint an officer to the command of the levies on both sides Hudson's River, has met the approbation of your honorable body. His acquaintance with the country, abilities, and zeal for the cause, are the motives that induced me to make choice of him. However, I am led to conclude, from that part of your letter, which desires me to transmit to him his appointment, with the resolution subjecting the levies on both sides of the river to

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* Governor Trumbull replied with his usual promptness and spirit;—"Immediately upon receipt of your letter I summoned my Council of Safety, and ordered nine regiments of our militia in addition to the five western regiments, fourteen in the whole, to march without loss of time and join you, under the command of Oliver Wolcott, colonel of a regiment, as their brigadier-general, who is appointed and commissioned to that office. I have likewise proposed, that companies of volunteers, consisting of able-bodied men not in the militia, should associate and march to your assistance, under officers they should choose, and I have promised them the same wages and allowance of provisions, that the Continental army receives. Colonel Ward's regiment is on its march to join you. I am far from trusting merely in the justice of our cause. I consider that as a just ground to hope for the smiles of Heaven on our exertions, which ought to be the greatest in our power. These fourteen regiments, sent on the present emergency, consist of substantial farmers, whose business requires their return, when the necessity of their further stay in the army is over; and I doubt not your attention thereto, and that you will dismiss them in whole, or in part, as soon as you think it safe and convenient."

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his command, that your honorable body entertain ideas of the matter somewhat different from my own.

When I was honored with your letter, enclosing the resolves of the Convention upon this subject, the state of the army under my command would not allow me to send a general officer in the Continental service to command the levies you then proposed to raise, supposing I had been authorized to do it; but considering myself without power in this instance, and the levies altogether of a provincial nature, to be raised by you and subject to your direction, I esteemed the nomination of a general officer over them, entrusted to my choice, a matter of favor and compliment, and as such I gratefully executed the trust. I am persuaded, that I expressed myself in this manner to the gentlemen, who were pleased to attend me upon the occasion, and that they had the same ideas. Under the influence of this opinion, all I expected was, that an appointment would be made in conformity to my nomination, if there was no objection to the gentleman I proposed, conceiving then, as I do now, that, if he were approved by the Convention, he would be their officer, and derive his appointment and authority from them. In this light I presume General Clinton must be viewed, and his powers over the levies you allude to flow entirely from you. Lest by accident the letter may have been mislaid, which I wrote you on the subject, I herewith enclose an extract, relating to this point. It is not in my power to send an experienced officer at this time to the post you mention. I trust that Colonel Clinton* will be equal to the command of both the Highland fortifications. They are under his direction at present. I have the honor to be, &c.

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* Colonel James Clinton, who was in the Continental service, and was promoted to the rank of brigadier the day after this letter was written.

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TO THE OFFICERS AND SOLDIERS OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ASSOCIATION.*

Head-Quarters, New York, 8 August, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

I had fully resolved to pay you a visit in New Jersey, if the movements of the enemy, and some intelligence indicating an early attack, had not induced me to suspend it. Allow me, therefore, to address you in this mode, as fellow citizens and fellow soldiers engaged in the same glorious cause; to represent to you, that the fate of our country depends, in all human probability, on the exertion of a few weeks; that it is of the utmost importance to keep up a respectable force for that time, and there can be no doubt, that success will crown our efforts, if we firmly and resolutely determine to conquer or to die. I have placed so much confidence in the spirit and zeal of the Associated Troops of Pennsylvania, that I cannot persuade myself an impatience to return home, or a less honorable motive, will defeat my well-grounded expectation, that they will do their country essential service, at this critical time, when the powers of despotism are all combined against it, and ready to strike their most decisive stroke.

If I could allow myself to doubt your spirit and perseverance, I should represent the ruinous consequences of your leaving the service, by setting before you the discouragement it would give the army, the confusion and shame of our friends, and the still more galling triumph of our enemies. But as I have no such doubts, I shall only thank you for the spirit and ardor you have

* Militia from Pennsylvania, who volunteered to serve till the Flying Camp could be collected. They were now stationed near Elizabethtown, and had become dissatisfied with the service. Many were daily returning home without orders.

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shown, in so readily marching to meet the enemy, and I am most confident you will crown it by a glorious perseverance. The honor and safety of our bleeding country, and every other motive that can influence the brave and heroic patriot, call loudly upon us, to acquit ourselves with resolution. In short, we must now determine to be enslaved or free. If we make freedom our choice, we must obtain it by the blessing of Heaven on our united and vigorous efforts.

I salute you, Gentlemen, most affectionately, and beg leave to remind you, that liberty, honor, and safety are all at stake; and I trust Providence will smile upon our efforts, and establish us once more, the inhabitants of a free and happy country. I am, Gentlemen, your most humble servant.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 8 August, 1776.

SIR,

I have enclosed a copy of a letter from Mr. Bowdoin, respecting the eastern Indians. Congress will thereby perceive, that they profess themselves to be well attached to our interest, and the summary of the measures taken to engage them in our service. I have the treaty at large between the honorable Council of the Massachusetts, on behalf of the United States, with the delegates of the St. John's and Micmac tribes. The probability of a copy's being sent already, and its great length, prevent one coming herewith. If Congress have not had it forwarded to them, I will send a copy by the first opportunity, after notice that it has not been received.

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August 9th. — By a report received from General Greene last night, at sunset and a little after about a hundred boats were seen bringing troops from Staten Island to the ships, three of which had fallen down towards the Narrows, having taken in soldiers from thirty of the boats. He adds, that, by the best observations of several officers, there appeared to be a general embarkation. I have written to General Mercer for two thousand men from the Flying Camp. Colonel Smallwood's battalion, as part of them, I expect this forenoon; but where the rest are to come from, I know not, as, by the General's last return, not more than three or four hundred of the new levies had got in.

By the Reverend Mr. Madison and a Mr. Johnson, two gentlemen of Virginia, who came from Staten Island yesterday, where they arrived the day before in the packet with Colonel Guy Johnson, I am informed that nothing material had taken place in England when they left it; that there had been a change in the French ministry, which many people thought foreboded a war; that it seemed to be believed by many, that Congress would attempt to buy off the foreign troops, and that it might be effected without great difficulty. Their accounts from Staten Island nearly correspond with what we had before. They say that every preparation is making for an attack; that the force now upon the island is about fifteen thousand; that they appear very impatient for the arrival of the foreign troops, a very small part only having got in. Whether they would attempt any thing before they come, they are uncertain; but they are sure they will as soon as they arrive, if not before. They say, from what they could collect from the conversation of officers, they mean to hem us in by getting above us and cutting off all communication with the country. That this is their plan

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seems to be corroborated by the circumstance of some ships of war going out at different times within a few days past, and other vessels. It is probable that a part are to go round and come up the Sound. Mr. Madison says Lord Howe's powers were not known when he left England; that General Conway moved, before his departure, that they might be laid before the Commons, and had his motion rejected by a large majority. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

New York, 11 August, 1776.

SIR,

Necessity obliges me to trouble your Honor with some more suspected persons, whose characters are such, as to make it unsafe for them to remain at their usual places of abode on Long Island; and there is no retreat in this province, where they may not do some mischief, or be less secure than our safety requires. As they are apprehended only on suspicion, arising from a general line of conduct unfriendly to the American cause, I have given them reason to expect from you every indulgence, which your good judgment will permit you to allow them, consistent with the public safety. There are but few of them, who will not defray their own expenses; and those few, their companions of better circumstances will assist, if convenience will admit their being together in the same place, which will be a saving to the public. If there be any of them quite destitute, I presume they must be put on the footing with other prisoners in like circumstances. They express a very earnest desire to be permitted to choose their own lodgings and accommodations, to which I see no objection. But as I

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have referred them entirely to you, I do not choose to enter into any engagement, on this or any other point; only adding generally, that I could wish they might enjoy every accommodation and indulgence, having respect to their rank and education, which may be deemed consistent with safety. And they are given to understand, that your humanity and politeness will most effectually prevent their being liable to any unnecessary hardships.

I am, with much respect, your Honor's, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 12 August, 1776.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favors of the 8th and 10th instant, with their several enclosures. I shall pay attention to the resolution respecting Lieutenant Josiah, and attempt to relieve him from his rigorous usage. Your letters to such of the gentlemen as were here have been delivered. The rest will be sent by the first opportunity. Since my last, the enemy have made no movements of consequence. They remain nearly in the same state; nor have we any further intelligence of their designs. They have not been yet joined by the remainder of the fleet with the Hessian troops. Colonel Smallwood and his battalion got in on Friday; and Colonel Miles is also here, with two battalions more of Pennsylvania riflemen.

The Convention of this State have been exerting themselves to call forth a portion of their militia to an encampment forming above Kingsbridge, to remain in service for the space of one month after their arrival; and also half of those in King's and Queen's counties, to reinforce the troops on Long Island till the 1st of

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September, unless sooner discharged. General Morris too is to take post with his brigade on the Sound and Hudson's river for ten days, to annoy the enemy in case they attempt to land; and others of their militia are directed to be in readiness, in case their aid should be required.* Upon the whole, from the information I have from the Convention, the militia ordered are now in motion, or will be so in a little time, and will amount to about three thousand or more. From Connecticut I am not certain what succours are coming. By one or two gentlemen, who have come from thence, I am told some of the militia were assembling, and, from the intelligence they had, would march this week. By a letter from Governor Trumbull I am advised, that the troops from that State, destined for the northern army, had marched for Skenesborough. General Ward too, by a letter of the 4th, informs me that the two regiments would march from Boston last week, having been cleansed and generally recovered from the smallpox. I have also countermanded my orders to Colonel Elmore, and directed him to join the northern army, hav-

* The Convention ordered, "that each man, who shall not have arms, shall bring with him a shovel, spade, pickaxe, or a scythe straightened and fixed on a pole." One fifth part of the militia from Albany county were also ordered to be drafted, and marched immediately to the encampment north of Kingsbridge; and it was "unanimously resolved, that, whenever the whole of the militia of any county should be ordered to march, they should bring with them all the disarmed and disaffected male inhabitants, from sixteen to fifty-five years of age, who should serve as fatigue-men to the respective regiments." — *MS. Journal of the Convention, August 10th.* On the same day, having learned that the inhabitants of King's county, Long Island, did not intend to oppose the enemy, the Convention appointed a committee to go into that county, and, if they found them in this temper, to disarm and secure the disaffected persons, remove or destroy the stock of grain, and, if they should judge it necessary, to lay the whole country waste. They were authorized to call on General Greene, who commanded in that quarter, for such assistance from the Continental troops as they should want.

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ing heard, after my orders to Connecticut for his marching hither, that he and most of his regiment were at Albany or in its vicinity. General Ward mentions, that the Council of the Massachusetts State will have in from two to three thousand of their militia to defend their lines and different posts, in lieu of the regiments ordered from thence agreeably to the resolution of Congress.

The enclosed copy of a resolve of this State, passed the 10th instant, will discover the apprehension they are under of the defection of the inhabitants of King's county from the common cause, and of the measures they have taken thereupon. I have directed General Greene to give the Committee such assistance as he can, and they may require, in the execution of their commission; though at the same time I wish the information the Convention have received upon the subject may prove groundless. I would beg leave to mention to Congress, that, in a letter I received from General Lee, he mentions the important consequences that would result from a number of cavalry being employed in the southern department. Without them, to use his own expressions, he can answer for nothing; with one thousand, he would ensure the safety of those States. I should have done myself the honor of submitting this matter to Congress before, at his particular request, had it not escaped my mind. From his acquaintance with that country, and the nature of the grounds, I doubt not he has weighed the matter well, and presume he has fully represented the advantages, that would arise from the establishment of such a corps. All I mean is, in compliance with his requisition, to mention the matter, that such consideration may be had upon it, if not already determined, as it may deserve. I am, &c.

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TO THE NEW YORK CONVENTION.

Head-Quarters, New York, 12 August, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

As the time is certainly near at hand, and may be hourly expected, which is to decide the fate of this city and the issue of this campaign, I thought it highly improper, that persons of suspected characters should remain in places, where their opportunities of doing mischief were much greater, than in the enemy's camp. I therefore have caused a number of them to be apprehended and removed to some distance; there to remain until this crisis is passed. Having formerly mentioned this subject to your honorable body, I would not again trouble them in a business, which former connexions, obligations, and interests must make very unpleasant, and which, I apprehend, must have been in danger of failing in the execution, unless done with all possible secrecy and despatch. I postponed this most disagreeable duty until the last moment; but the claims of the army upon me, and an application from a number of well affected inhabitants, concurring with my own opinion, obliged me to enter upon it while time and circumstances would permit. I have ordered a very strict attention to be paid to the necessities of the gentlemen apprehended, and to their comfortable accommodation in every respect, both here and at the places of their destination. I have also written to the Committee of Queen's county, that this step is not to be considered as making their property liable to any injury or appropriation, unless they should receive directions from your honorable body, to whom I have referred them on this subject; being resolved in all cases, where the most absolute necessity does not require it, to confine myself

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wholly to that line, which shall exclude every idea of interfering with the authority of the State.

Some of these gentlemen have expressed doubts, and raised difficulties, from engagements they lie under to your honorable body, or to some committees. But they do not appear to me to deserve much attention, as they cannot, with any propriety, be charged with a breach of any parole under their present circumstances; but I beg leave to submit to your consideration the propriety of removing the pretence. I am, Gentlemen, with great respect and regard, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 13 August, 1776.

SIR,

As there is reason to believe, that but little time will elapse before the enemy make their attack, I have

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* In his instructions to the Committee of Queen's county he said;—"The public exigencies having required my apprehending a number of suspected persons in your county, and sending them into another colony for a short time, they have expressed some apprehensions that in their absence their property may be exposed to injury, and their families deprived of the support they would otherwise derive from it. I therefore beg leave to acquaint you, that a temporary restraint of their persons is all, that is intended by the present measure, and that it would give me much pain, if it should be construed to extend to any depredation of property; that matter resting entirely with the jurisdiction of the civil authority of the province."

At the same time he gave notice to the Convention of New Jersey, that many suspected persons from different parts of that province were removing to the neighbourhood of Monmouth, evidently with the design of being near and aiding the enemy, and requested the Convention to take immediate and effectual measures to secure such persons, and prevent them from doing the mischief they contemplated.

The President of the New York Convention replied to the above letter;—"I am directed by the Convention to return their thanks to your Excellency for the attention you have paid to the removal of suspicious and

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thought it advisable to remove all the papers in my hands, respecting the affairs of the States, from this place. I hope the event will show the precaution was unnecessary; but yet prudence required that it should be done, lest by any accident they might fall into their hands. They are all contained in a large box, nailed up, and committed to the care of Lieutenant-Colonel Reed, brother of the adjutant-general, to be delivered to Congress, in whose custody I would beg leave to deposit them until our affairs shall be so circumstanced as to admit of their return. The enemy, since my letter of yesterday, have received a further augmentation of thirty-six ships to their fleet, making the whole that have arrived since yesterday morning ninety-six.

I have the honor to be, &c.

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dangerous persons from the environs of the city of New York. Deeply sensible with your Excellency of the importance and necessity of this measure, the Convention had entered into a resolution for that purpose, previous to their arrival at this place; but the difficulty of preparing proper lists, the danger of giving the alarm to some by the apprehension of others, and the dilatoriness of proceedings inseparable from a large body, together with the great urgency of other public affairs, delayed the completion of this business until your Excellency had taken it under your immediate cognizance. The delicate state of the present juncture did, in the opinion of this Convention, fully vest your Excellency with all the civil power necessary for the immediate safety of the army under your command, and consequently of the American cause; and, considering the great divisions, which have prevailed among the inhabitants of the State of New York, by sparing this House that disagreeable task, you have conferred upon them a considerable obligation. The Convention, Sir, are at a loss to conceive on what foundation those gentlemen, who had given their paroles to a committee of this House, could assume the opinion, that any dangers would after their capture result from it; since evidently the parole is by that step entirely dissolved; but as doubts may remain in their minds, a resolution is enclosed to your Excellency, which, when you shall have made it known to them, must certainly obliterate all their scruples."

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

New York, 14 August, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I yesterday morning received your letter by Bennet, the express, and am extremely sorry to find, that the army is still in a sickly and melancholy state. The precaution taken to halt the reinforcements at Skenesborough, which are destined for your succour, is certainly prudent. They should not be exposed or made liable to the calamities already too prevalent, unless in cases of extreme necessity. Dr. Stringer has been here, with Dr. Morgan, and is now at Philadelphia. I trust he will obtain some necessary supplies of medicines, which will enable him, under the smiles of Providence, to relieve your distress in some degree. By a letter from General Ward, two regiments, Whitcomb's and Phinny's, were to march to your aid last week. They have happily had the smallpox, and will not be subject to the fatal consequences attending that disorder. I am glad to hear, that the vessels for the Lakes are going on with such industry. Maintaining the superiority over the water is certainly of infinite importance. I trust neither courage nor activity will be wanting in those, to whom the business is committed. If assigned to General Arnold, none will doubt of his exertions.

In answer to those parts of your letter, in which you so highly resent the conduct of the general officers here, I would observe, Sir, that you are under a mistake, when you suppose a council of officers had sat upon those, who composed the board at Crown Point. When intelligence was first brought, that the post was evacuated, it spread a general alarm, and occasioned much anxiety, as it was almost universally believed, that Crown Point was of the last importance, and the only post, which

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could give us, in conjunction with our naval force, a superiority over the Lake, and prevent the enemy's penetrating into this and the eastern governments. As this matter was occasionally mentioned, the general officers, some from their own knowledge, and others from the opinion they had formed, expressed themselves to that effect, as did all whom I heard speak upon the subject. Added to this, the remonstrance of the officers, transmitted by General Schuyler at the same time the account was brought, did not contribute a little to authorize the opinion, which was generally entertained. They surely seemed to have some reasons in their support, though it was not meant to give the least encouragement or sanction to proceedings of such a nature. Upon the whole, no event, of which I have been informed for a long time, produced a more general chagrin and consternation. But yet there was no council called upon the occasion, nor court of inquiry, nor court-martial, as has been suggested by some. I will not take up more time upon the subject, nor make it a matter of further discussion, not doubting but those, who determined that the post ought to be abandoned, conceived it would promote the interest of the great cause we are engaged in. By the by, I wish your description perfectly corresponded with the real circumstances of this army. Before this comes to hand, you will most probably have heard of the arrival of Clinton and his army from the southward. They are now at Staten Island, as are the whole or the greater part of the Hessian and foreign troops. Since Monday, ninety-six ships have come in, which we are informed is the last division of Howe's fleet, that touched at Halifax. We are in daily expectation, that they will make their attack, all their movements, and the advices we have, indicating that they are on the point of it. I am, dear Sir, &c.

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TO THE NEW YORK CONVENTION.

Head-Quarters, New York, 17 August, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

When I consider, that the city of New York will in all human probability very soon be the scene of a bloody conflict, I cannot but view the great numbers of women, children, and infirm persons remaining in it, with the most melancholy concern. When the men-of-war passed up the river, the shrieks and cries of these poor creatures running every way with their children, were truly distressing, and I fear they will have an unhappy effect on the ears and minds of our young and inexperienced soldiery. Can no method be devised for their removal? Many doubtless are of ability to remove themselves, but there are others in a different situation. Some provision for them afterwards would also be a necessary consideration. It would relieve me from great anxiety, if your honorable body would immediately deliberate upon it, and form and execute some plan for their removal and relief; in which I will coöperate and assist to the utmost of my power. In the mean time, I have thought it proper to recommend to persons, of the above description, to convey themselves without delay to some place of safety, with their most valuable effects.* I have the honor to be, &c.

* A committee was appointed by the Convention conformably to this suggestion, and empowered to remove such persons as they should think proper, and to afford the necessary assistance and support to those in indigent circumstances. A proclamation was likewise issued by the Commander-in-chief, recommending this removal to the inhabitants, and requiring officers and soldiers of the army to afford their aid. The Convention likewise requested the general committee of New York to give their assistance in effecting the removal in the most humane and expeditious manner possible.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE LORD HOWE.

Head-Quarters, New York, 17 August, 1776.

MY LORD,

Being authorized by Congress, as their commanders in every department are, to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, and presuming, as well from the nature of your Lordship's command, as the information that General Howe has been pleased to honor me with, that the exchange in the naval line will be subject to your Lordship's directions, I beg leave to propose the following mode of exchange for your Lordship's consideration, namely, "Officers for those of equal rank, and sailors for sailors." If this proposal should be agreeable to your Lordship, I am charged in a particular manner to exchange any officer belonging to the British navy in our hands, and of equal rank, for Lieutenant Josiah, who was lately made prisoner in a ship retaken by the Cerberus frigate. The reason, my Lord, of my being charged to propose the exchange of Lieutenant Josiah, in preference to that of any other officer, is, that authentic intelligence has been received, that, without regard to his rank as an officer, he has not only been subjected to the duties of a common seaman, but has experienced many other marks of indignity.*

As a different line of conduct, my Lord, has ever been observed towards the officers of your navy, who

* He was first lieutenant on board a Continental armed ship, under Captain Nicholas Biddle; and was taken by the British frigate Cerberus while in a prize ship, which Captain Biddle had captured. On refusing to do duty before the mast, he was given in charge to three boatswain's mates, and treated with much severity. He found means to convey a letter to his friends describing his situation. This letter was communicated to Congress.

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have fallen into our hands, it becomes not only a matter of right, but of duty, to mention this to your Lordship, to the end that an inquiry may be made into the case above referred to. From your Lordship's character for humanity, I am led to presume, that the hardships imposed on Lieutenant Josiah are without either your knowledge or concurrence, and therefore most readily hope, that, upon this representation, your Lordship will enjoin all officers under your command to pay such regard to the treatment of those, who may fall into their hands, as their different ranks and situations require, and such as your Lordship would wish to see continued by us to those, who are already in our power, or who may hereafter, by the chance of war, be subjected to it. I have the honor to be, my Lord, with great respect, your Lordship's most obedient servant.*

TO LORD DRUMMOND.†

New York, 17 August, 1776.

MY LORD,

I have your Lordship's favor of this day, accompanied by papers on subjects of the greatest moment, and deserving the most deliberate consideration. I can allow much for your Lordship's well-meant zeal on such an occasion, but I fear it has transported you beyond that attention to your parole, which belongs to the character of a man of strict honor. How your Lordship can reconcile your past or present conduct with your engagement, so as to satisfy your own mind, I must sub-

* See Lord Howe's answer in the APPENDIX, No. III.

† For various particulars respecting Lord Drummond, see Vol. III. pp. 288, 525.

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mit to your own feelings; but I find myself under the disagreeable necessity of objecting to the mode of negotiation proposed, while your Lordship's conduct appears so exceptionable. I shall, by express, forward to Congress your Lordship's letter and the papers which accompanied it. The result will be communicated as soon as possible. I am sorry to have detained your Lordship so long, but the unavoidable necessity must be my apology. I am, my Lord, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, New York, 17 August, 1776.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to transmit the enclosed letter from Major French, and at the same time to inform you, that his exchange for Major Meigs, whose parole I am advised you have, will meet my approbation. I would take the liberty also to propose an exchange of any captain you may choose for Captain Dearborn, whose parole I have heard was delivered to you with Major Meigs's. Give me leave to assure you, Sir, that I feel myself greatly obliged by the polite conclusion of your letter of the 1st instant, and have a high sense of the honor and satisfaction I should have received from your personal acquaintance. The different state of the colonies from what it was last war, and which has deprived me of that happiness, cannot be regretted by any one more, Sir, than by your most obedient humble servant.*

* "The General being informed, to his great surprise, that a report prevails and is industriously spread far and wide, that Lord Howe has made propositions of peace, calculated by designing persons probably to lull us into a fatal security; his duty obliges him to declare, that no such offer has been made by Lord Howe, but, on the contrary, from the best intelli-

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TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

New York, 18 August, 1776.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favor of the 13th instant; and, at the same time that I think you and your honorable Council of Safety highly deserving of the thanks of the States, for the measures you have adopted, in order to give the most early and speedy succour to this army, give me leave to return you mine in a particular manner. When the whole of the reinforcements arrive, I flatter myself we shall be competent to every exigency, and that, with the smiles of Providence upon our arms and vigorous exertions, we shall baffle the designs of our inveterate foes, formidable as they are. Our situation was truly alarming a little while since; but, by the kind interposition and aid of our friends, it is now much better.

You may rest assured, Sir, that due consideration shall be had to the several militia regiments that have come, and are marching to our assistance, and that they shall be dismissed as soon as circumstances will admit of it. But I trust, so long as there may be occasion for their services, that the same spirit and commendable zeal, which induced them to come, will induce their continuance. I sincerely wish it were in my power to ascertain the particular period when they will be needed, that they may not be detained one unnecessary moment from their homes and common pursuits. But, as this

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gence he can procure, the army may expect an attack, as soon as the wind and tide shall prove favorable. He hopes, therefore, that every man's mind and arms will be prepared for action, and, when called to it, show our enemies and the whole world, that freemen contending on their own land are superior to any mercenaries on earth."— *Orderly Book, August 20th.*

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cannot be done, as the approaching contest and trial between the two armies will, most unquestionably, produce events of the utmost importance to the States, as the issue, if favorable, will put us on such a footing, as to bid defiance to the utmost malice of the British nation, and those in alliance with her, I have not a doubt but they will most readily consent to stay, and cheerfully undergo every present and temporary inconvenience, so long as they are necessary.

I am happy that Captain Van Buren has succeeded so well in the business he was upon, it being of great consequence to us to fit out and maintain our vessels on the Lakes.* On the night of the 16th, two of our fire-vessels attempted to burn the ships of war up the river. One of these boarded the Phœnix of forty-four guns, and was grappled with her for some minutes, but unluckily she cleared herself. The only damage the enemy sustained was the destruction of one tender. It is agreed on all hands, that our people, engaged in this affair, behaved with great resolution and intrepidity. One of the captains, Thomas, it is to be feared, perished in the attempt or in making his escape by swimming, as he has not been heard of. His bravery entitled him to a better fate. Though this enterprise did not succeed to our wishes, I incline to think it alarmed the enemy greatly; for this morning the Phœnix and Rose, with their two remaining tenders, taking advantage of a brisk and prosperous gale, with a favorable tide, quitted their stations, and have returned and joined the rest of the fleet. As they passed our several batteries, they were fired upon, but without any damage that I could per-

* Captain Van Buren had been sent down to Connecticut and Rhode Island to obtain sail-cloth, cordage, and other articles for the flotilla on Lake Champlain.

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ceive.* The whole of the British forces in America, except those employed in Canada, are now here, Clinton's arrival being followed the last week by that of Lord Dunmore, who now forms a part of the army we are to oppose. His coming has added but little to their strength. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 20 August, 1776.

SIR,

I was yesterday morning favored with yours of the 17th, accompanied by several resolutions of Congress, and commissions for officers appointed to the late vacancies in this army. I wrote some days ago to General Schuyler, to propose to Generals Carleton and Burgoyne an exchange of prisoners, in consequence of a former resolve of Congress authorizing their commanders in each department to negotiate one. That of Major Meigs for Major French, and Captain Dearborn for any

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* It appeared afterwards, that the ships sustained a good deal of injury in passing the upper batteries, near Fort Washington and Haerlem River. General Heath was on the spot, and reported, that the Phœnix was three times hulled by the shot from Mount Washington, and one of the tenders once; and that the Rose was hulled once by a shot from Burdett's Ferry on the opposite side of the river. Riflemen were posted along the banks of the river, but the men on board were kept so close, that it was not known that any damage was done by the rifles. Grape-shot were fired from the vessels as they passed, but without injury except to a tent. The Phœnix and Rose had been five weeks in the river, and, by the aid of their tenders and small boats, soundings had been taken in every part as far up as the entrance of the Highlands. The tender, which had been burnt by one of the fire-ships, was towed on shore the next day, although under the fire of the enemy's cannon. This was effected by a lieutenant and two men, in a manner that reflected great credit upon their enterprise and courage. A six-pound cannon, three smaller ones, and ten swivels were taken out of the tender.

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officer of equal rank, I submitted to General Howe's consideration, by letter on the 17th, understanding their paroles had been sent to him by General Carleton; but I have not yet received his answer upon the subject.

In respect to the exchange of the prisoners in Canada, if a proposition on that head has not been already made, and I believe it has not, the enclosed copy of General Carleton's orders (transmitted to me under seal by Major Bigelow, who was sent with a flag to General Burgoyne from Ticonderoga, with the proceedings of Congress on the breach of capitulation at the Cedars, and the inhuman treatment of our people afterwards) will show it is unnecessary, as he has determined to send them to their own provinces, there to remain as prisoners; interdicting at the same time all kind of intercourse between us and his army, except such as may be for the purpose of imploring the King's mercy. The assassination, which he mentions, of Brigadier-General Gordon, is a fact entirely new to me, and what I never heard of before. I shall not trouble Congress with my strictures upon this performance, so highly unbecoming the character of a soldier and gentleman, only observing that its design is somewhat artful, and that each boatman with Major Bigelow was furnished with a copy. I have also transmitted to Congress a copy of the Major's journal, to which I beg leave to refer them for the intelligence reported by him on his return from the truce.*

* The events attending the capitulation at the Cedars, and the agreement for the exchange of prisoners entered into by Arnold, were of so extraordinary and irritating a nature, in regard to the conduct of the enemy, that Congress, at the same time they confirmed Arnold's stipulation, resolved, "that, previous to the delivery of the prisoners to be returned on our part, the British commander in Canada be required to deliver into our hands the authors, abettors, and perpetrators of the horrid murder committed on the prisoners, to suffer such punishment as their crime deserves; and also to make indemnification for the plunder at the

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I am advised by the examination of a Captain Britton (master of a vessel that had been taken), transmitted to me by General Mercer, that the general report among the enemy's troops, when he came off, was, that they were to attack Long Island, and to secure our works there if possible, at the same time that another part of their army was to land above this city. This information is corroborated by many other accounts, and is probably true; nor will it be possible to prevent their landing on the Island, as its great extent affords a variety of places favorable for that purpose, and the whole of our works on it are at the end opposite to the city. However, we shall attempt to harass them as much as possible, which will be all that we can do.

I have the honor to be, &c.

Cedars, taken contrary to the faith of the capitulation; and that, until such delivery and indemnification be made, the said prisoners be not delivered."—*Journals, July 10th.* This was in effect a refusal to confirm the treaty, and was so considered by the commanding officers in Canada. The report of the committee of Congress on this subject, and the resolves respecting the treaty, were forwarded to General Burgoyne. The despatch was sent under the charge of Major Bigelow from Ticonderoga. He proceeded down the Lake to Isle-aux-Noix, which was then a British outpost, where he was detained, and the despatch was forwarded to General Burgoyne then at St. John's. Major Bigelow stayed ten days at Isle-aux-Noix, where he and his party were treated very civilly by Captain Craig, the commander of that post, and by the other officers. At length the messenger came back from St. John's, with a letter directed to "*George Washington, Esquire,*" which was handed to Major Bigelow, and with which he returned immediately up the Lake to Ticonderoga, being escorted on his way as far as Gilleland's by a boat with two British officers and nine Canadians.

This letter General Gates sent off by express to General Washington. When opened it was found to be a mere envelope, enclosing a paper purporting to be a military order issued by General Carleton at Chamblee, on the 7th of August, without signature or address, and unaccompanied by any remarks. The contents of this paper were of so singular a character, and comported so little with the spirit and temper of a high-minded officer, that they might well have excited a strong suspicion as to their being genuine, had not the despatch been formally entrusted to Major Bigelow as coming from General Burgoyne, or General Carleton, who was Com-

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TO THE NEW YORK CONVENTION.

Head-Quarters, New York, 23 August, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

I am favored with yours of the 23d, acquainting me with a report now circulating, "that if the American army should be obliged to retreat from this city, any individual may set it on fire." I can assure you, Gentlemen, that this report is not founded upon the least authority from me; on the contrary, I am so sensible of the value of such a city, and the consequences of its destruction to many worthy citizens and their families, that nothing but the last necessity, and that such as should justify me to the whole world, would induce me to give orders for that purpose. The unwillingness shown by many families to remove, notwithstanding your and my recommendations, may perhaps have led some persons to propagate the report, with honest and innocent intentions; but as your letter first informed me

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mander-in-chief. The order prohibits all intercourse "with rebels, traitors, rioters, disturbers of the public peace, plunderers, robbers, assassins, or murderers," and adds, that "should emissaries from such lawless men again presume to approach the army, whether under the name of flag-of-truce men, or ambassadors, except when they come to implore the King's mercy, their persons shall be immediately seized and committed to close confinement, and proceeded against as the law directs." After a good deal more in the same style of rodomontade, the order concludes by directing "all the prisoners from the rebellious provinces, who chose to return home, to hold themselves in readiness to embark at a short notice, and that the commissary should visit the transports destined for them, and see that wholesome provisions and necessary clothing, with all possible conveniences for their passage, be prepared; and that the prisoners were to look on their respective provinces as their prisons, there to remain till further enlarged, or summoned to appear before the Commander-in-chief in Canada." With no other explanation, than the order itself, it is now impossible to decide what degree of credit ought to be ascribed to it. From the tenor of Washington's letter above, and from the circumstance of his transmitting the paper to Congress, it is obvious, that he considered it genuine. General Schuyler and General Gates were of the same opin-

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of it, I cannot pretend to say by whom, or for what purpose, it has been done. As my views, with regard to the removal of the women and children, have happily coincided with your sentiments, and a committee has been appointed to carry them into execution, I submit it to your judgment, whether it would not be proper for the Committee to meet immediately in this city, and give notice of their attendance on this business. There are many, who anxiously wish to remove, but have not the means. I am, with much respect and regard, Gentlemen, yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, New York, 23 August, 1776.

SIR,

Yesterday morning the enemy landed at Gravesend Bay, upon Long Island, to the number of about eight

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ion. It is remarkable, that a copy of the same paper was put into the hands of each of Major Bigelow's men, when he left Isle-aux-Noix. If the order actually proceeded from General Carleton, it must be allowed to indicate few of those elevated traits, which we should expect to find connected with that generous humanity, so conspicuous in his character on other occasions.

General Gordon of the British army had been wantonly and barbarously shot on the 24th of July, by an American scout, near St. John's. A lieutenant and four men from Ticonderoga, who were on a scout within the enemy's lines, concealed themselves near the road leading from St. John's to Laprairie. While they were in that concealment, General Gordon passed alone on horseback, and in full uniform. The lieutenant deliberately fired at him, and shot him through the body. The wound was mortal, but the General was able to ride to St. John's, where he soon expired. This act of atrocity kindled the indignation of the British officers, and, occurring but two or three days before the despatch from Congress arrived, it may have had a principal influence in dictating the paper called General Carleton's order, so little consistent with the dignity and self-respect, which every gentleman, and especially an officer in high rank, must desire to possess.

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thousand, from the best information I can get. Colonel Hand retreated before them, burning as he came along several parcels of wheat, and such other matters as he judged would fall into the enemy's hands. Our first accounts were, that they intended, by a forced march, to surprise General Sullivan's lines, who commands during the illness of General Greene; whereupon I immediately reinforced that post with six regiments. But the enemy halted last night at Flatbush. If they should attack General Sullivan this day, and should show no disposition to attack me likewise, at the making of the next flood,* I shall send such further reinforcements to Long Island as I may judge expedient, not choosing to weaken this post too much, before I am certain that the enemy are not making a feint upon Long Island to draw our force to that quarter, when their real design may perhaps be upon this. I am, &c.

P. S. The flood tide will begin to make about eleven o'clock, at which time, if the detachment ordered yesterday were to move to the high and open grounds about Mr. Delancey's and Bloomingdale, they would be ready to come forward, or turn back, as occasion should require; it would give them a little exercise, and show them wherein they are wanting in any matter.†

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* That is, to attack New York, where General Washington was stationed.

† *From the Orderly Book, August 23d.* — "The enemy have now landed on Long Island, and the hour is fast approaching, on which the honor and success of this army, and the safety of our bleeding country will depend. Remember, officers and soldiers, that you are freemen, fighting for the blessings of liberty; that slavery will be your portion, and that of your posterity, if you do not acquit yourselves like men. Remember how your courage and spirit have been despised and traduced by your cruel invaders; though they have found by dear experience at Boston, Charlestown, and other places, what a few brave men, contending in their own land, and in the best of causes, can do against hirelings and

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 23 August, 1776.

SIR,

I beg leave to inform Congress, that yesterday morning, and in the course of the preceding night, a considerable body of the enemy, amounting by report to eight or nine thousand, and these all British, landed from the transport-ships mentioned in my last, at Gravesend Bay on Long Island, and have approached within three miles of our lines, having marched across the low cleared grounds near the woods at Flatbush, where they are halted, according to my last intelligence. I have detached from hence six battalions, as a reinforcement to our troops there, which are all that I can spare at this time, not knowing but the fleet may move up with the remainder of their army, and make an attack here, at the next flood tide. If they do not, I shall send a further reinforcement, should it be necessary; and I have ordered five battalions more to be in readiness for that purpose. I have no doubt but a little time will produce some important events. I hope they will be happy. The reinforcement detached yesterday went off in high spirits; and I have the pleasure to inform you, that the whole of the army, that are effective and capable of

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mercenaries. Be cool, but determined; do not fire at a distance, but wait for orders from your officers. It is the General's express orders, that if any man attempt to skulk, lie down, or retreat without orders, he be instantly shot down as an example. He hopes no such will be found in this army; but, on the contrary, that every one for himself resolving to conquer or die, and trusting in the smiles of Heaven upon so just a cause, will behave with bravery and resolution. Those, who are distinguished for their gallantry and good conduct, may depend upon being honorably noticed, and suitably rewarded; and if this army will but emulate and imitate their brave countrymen in other parts of America, he has no doubt they will, by a glorious victory, save their country, and acquire to themselves immortal honor."

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duty, discover the same, and great cheerfulness. I have been obliged to appoint Major-General Sullivan to the command on the Island, owing to General Greene's indisposition; he has been extremely ill for several days, and still continues bad.* By Wednesday evening's post I received a letter from General Ward, enclosing a copy of the invoice of the ordnance stores taken by Captain Manly, with the appraisement of the same (made in pursuance of my direction, founded on the order of Congress), which I do myself the honor of transmitting. You will also receive the treaty between the Commissioners and the Indians of the Six Nations and others at the German Flats, which General Schuyler requested me to forward.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.†

Head-Quarters, 25 August, 1776.

SIR,

It was with no small degree of concern, that I perceived yesterday a scattering, unmeaning, and wasteful fire from our people at the enemy. No one good consequence can attend such irregularities, but several bad ones will inevitably follow from them. Had it not been for this unsoldierlike and disorderly practice, we have the

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* In a letter signed by General Greene, and dated, Long Island, August 15th, he says;—"I am very sorry to be under the necessity of acquainting you, that I am confined to my bed with a raging fever. The critical situation of affairs makes me the more anxious; but I hope through the assistance of Providence to be able to ride, before the presence of the enemy may make it absolutely necessary."

† Putnam had just been sent over to take the general command on Long Island. Sullivan had the immediate command of all the troops not within the lines at Brooklyn.

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greatest reason imaginable to believe, that numbers of deserters would have left the enemy's army last year; but fear prevented them from approaching our lines then, and must for ever continue to operate in like manner, whilst every soldier conceives himself at liberty to fire when and at what he pleases. This is not the only nor the greatest evil resulting from the practice; for, as we do not know the hour of the enemy's approach to our lines, but have every reason to apprehend that it will be sudden and violent whenever attempted, we shall have our men so scattered, and more than probable without ammunition, that the consequences must prove fatal to us; besides this, there will be no possibility of distinguishing between a real and a false alarm.

I must therefore, Sir, in earnest terms desire you to call the colonels and commanding officers of corps without loss of time before you; and let them afterwards do the same by their respective officers, and charge them, in express and positive terms, to stop these irregularities, as they value the good of the service, their own honor, and the safety of the army, which, under God, depends wholly upon the good order and government that is observed in it. At the same time, I would have you form proper lines of defence around your encampment and works on the most advantageous ground. Your guards, which compose this defence, are to be particularly instructed in their duty, and a brigadier of the day is to remain constantly upon the lines, that he may be upon the spot to command, and see that orders are executed. Field-officers should also be appointed to go the rounds, and report the situation of the guards; and no person should be allowed to pass beyond the guards, without special order in writing.

By restraining the loose, disorderly, and unsoldierlike firing before mentioned, I do not mean to discourage

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partisans and scouting parties; on the contrary I wish to see a spirit of this sort prevailing, under proper regulations, and officers, either commissioned or non-commissioned, as cases require, to be directed by yourself or licensed by the brigadier of the day upon the spot, to be sent upon this service. Such skirmishing as may be effected in this manner will be agreeable to the rules of propriety, and may be attended with salutary effects, inasmuch as it will inure the troops to fatigue and danger, will harass the enemy, and may make prisoners and prevent their parties from getting the horses and cattle from the interior parts of the Island, which are objects of infinite importance to us, especially the two last. All the men not upon duty are to be compelled to remain in or near their respective camps, or quarters, that they may turn out at a moment's warning; nothing being more probable, than that the enemy will allow little time enough to prepare for the attack. The officers also are to exert themselves to the utmost to prevent every kind of abuse to private property, and to bring every offender to the punishment he deserves. Shameful it is to find, that those men, who have come hither in defence of the rights of mankind, should turn invaders of it by destroying the substance of their friends. The burning of houses where the apparent good of the service is not promoted by it, and the pillaging of them, at all times and upon all occasions, are to be discountenanced and punished with the utmost severity. In short, it is to be hoped, that men who have property of their own, and a regard for the rights of others, will shudder at the thought of rendering any man's situation, to whose protection he has come, more insufferable than his open and avowed enemy would make it; when by duty and every rule of humanity they ought to aid, and not oppress, the distressed in their habitations. The distinc-

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tion between a well regulated army and a mob, is the good order and discipline of the former, and the licentious and disorderly behaviour of the latter. Men, therefore, who are not employed as mere hirelings, but have stepped forth in defence of every thing, that is dear and valuable not only to themselves but to posterity, should take uncommon pains to conduct themselves with the greatest propriety and good order, as their honor and reputation call loudly upon them to do it.

The wood next to Red Hook should be well attended to. Put some of the most disorderly riflemen into it. The militia are the most indifferent troops, those I mean who are least tutored and have seen least service, and will do for the interior works, whilst your best men should at all hazards prevent the enemy's passing the wood, and approaching your works. The woods should be secured by *abatis* where necessary, to make the enemy's approach as difficult as possible. Traps and ambuscades should be laid for their parties, if you find they are sent out after cattle. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 26 August, 1776.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favors, and am happy to find my answer to Lord Drummond has met the approbation of Congress. Whatever his views were, most certainly his conduct respecting his parole is highly reprehensible. Almost the whole of the enemy's fleet have fallen down to the Narrows; and, from this circumstance, and the striking of their tents and their several encampments on Staten Island from time to time previous to the departure of the ships from thence, we

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are led to think they mean to land the main body of their army on Long Island, and to make their grand push there. I have ordered over considerable reinforcements to our troops there, and shall continue to send more as circumstances may require. There has been a little skirmishing and irregular firing kept up between their and our advanced guards, in which Colonel Martin of the Jersey levies has received a wound in his breast, which, it is apprehended, will prove mortal; a private has had his leg broken by a cannon-ball, and another has received a shot in the groin from their musketry. This is all the damage they have yet done us; what they have sustained is not known.

The shifting and changing, which the regiments have undergone of late, have prevented their making proper returns, and of course put it out of my power to transmit a general one of the army. However, I believe our strength is much the same as it was when the last was made, with the addition of nine militia regiments from the State of Connecticut, averaging about three hundred and fifty men each. Our people still continue to be very sickly. The papers designed for the foreign troops have been put into several channels, in order that they might be conveyed to them; and from the information I had yesterday, I have reason to believe many have fallen into their hands.* I have enclosed a copy

* As the Hessians and other foreign troops were mercenaries, hired to fight in a cause in which they could feel no personal interest, the Congress thought it expedient to endeavour to entice them away from the service, and induce them to settle in the United States. For this purpose a resolution was passed, promising to all such as would leave the British army a free exercise of their religion, and investing them with all the rights, privileges, and immunities of natives, and moreover engaging to every such person fifty acres of unappropriated land, to be held by him and his heirs in absolute property. This resolution, and other papers explaining the nature of the war, and of the part taken in it by the foreign troops, were ordered to be translated into German and circulated among

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of Lord Drummond's second letter in answer to mine, which I received since I transmitted his first, and which I have thought it necessary to lay before Congress, that they may possess the whole of the correspondence between us. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Long Island, 29 August, half after four, A. M., 1776.

SIR,

I was last night honored with your favor, accompanied by sundry resolutions of Congress. Those respecting the officers, that may be wounded in the service of the States, are founded much in justice, and I should hope may be productive of many salutary consequences. As to the encouragement to the Hessian officers, I wish it may have the desired effect. Perhaps it might have

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them. — *Journals, August 14th.* With this intent they were forwarded to General Washington. By another resolution, Congress held out to foreign officers, who should leave the British army and become citizens of the United States, the encouragement of a bounty in land; to a colonel one thousand acres, to a lieutenant-colonel eight hundred, and so on according to the rank of the subordinate officers. — *Journals, August 27th.*

Dr. Franklin was one of the committee for carrying these resolutions into effect, and a letter from him to General Gates will explain the method adopted for the purpose. "The Congress being advised," he writes, "that there was a probability that the Hessians might be induced to quit the British service by offers of land, they came to two resolves for this purpose, which, being translated into German and printed, are to be sent to Staten Island to be distributed if practicable among that people. Some of them have tobacco marks on the back, that so tobacco being put up in them in small quantities, as the tobacconists use, and suffered to fall into the hands of these people, they might divide the papers as plunder, before their officers could come to the knowledge of the contents and prevent their being read by the men. That was the first resolve. A second has since been made for the officers themselves. I am desired to send some of both sorts to you, that, if you find it practicable, you may convey them among the Germans, who may come against you." — *MS. Letter.*

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been better, had the offer been sooner made. Before this, you will probably have received a letter from Mr. Harrison, dated the 27th, advising you of the engagement between a detachment of our men and the enemy on that day.* I am sorry to inform Congress, that I have not yet heard either of General Sullivan or Lord Stirling, who were among the missing after the engagement; nor can I ascertain our loss. I am hopeful, that part of our men will yet get in; several did yesterday morning. That of the enemy is also uncertain; the accounts are various. I incline to think they suffered a good deal. Some deserters say five hundred were killed and wounded.

There was some skirmishing, the greater part of yesterday, between parties from the enemy and our people; in the evening it was pretty smart. The event I have not yet learned. The weather of late has been extremely wet. Yesterday it rained severely the whole afternoon, which distressed our people much, not having a sufficiency of tents to cover them, and what we have not being got over yet. I am in hopes they will all be got to-day, and that they will be more comfortably provided for, though the great scarcity of these articles distresses us beyond measure, not having any thing like a sufficient number to protect our people from the inclemency of the weather; which has occasioned much sickness, and the men to be almost broken down. †

I have the honor to be, &c.

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* See the letter from Colonel Harrison, and another from Lord Stirling, in the APPENDIX, No. IV.

† In addition to the forces on the Island at the time of the action, General Mifflin had come down from Fort Washington with Shee's, Magaw's, and Glover's regiments, amounting to about thirteen hundred men, who had passed over to Brooklyn on the 28th, without tents.

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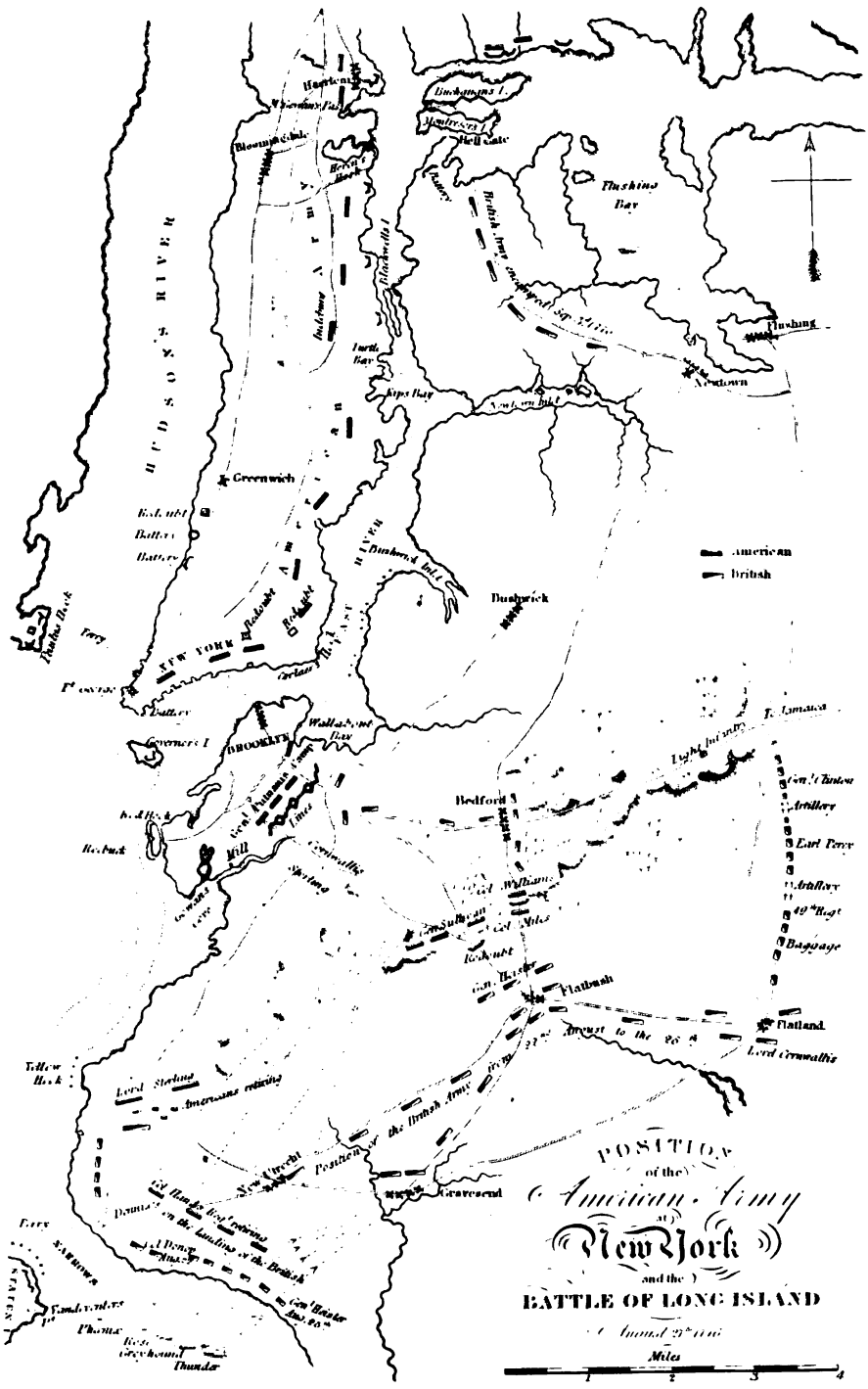
POSITION
of the
American Army
at
New York
and the
BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND
Miles
1
2
3
4
American
British
HUDSON'S RIVER
Greenwich
Battery
NEW YORK
BROOKLYN
Wallabout Bay
Governors I
Bedford
Flatbush
Flatland
Gravesend
Flushing Bay
Flushing
Newtown
Bushwick
Kips Bay
Turtle Bay
Blackwells I
Bloomingdale
Haerlem
Buchanans I
Bell Gate
Lord Cornwallis
Lord Sterling
Americans retiring
Position of the British Army
Baggage
Artillery
Earl Percy
Gen Clinton
Light Infantry
Yellow Hook
Red Hook
Gowanus Cove
Mill
Cornwallis
Sterling
Col Williams
Gen Sullivan
Col Miles
Redoubt
Gen Heister
Gen Heister
Vandevoorts
Phoenix
Greyhound
Thunder

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE NEW YORK CONVENTION.

New York, 30 August, 1776.

SIR,

Your favor of this date is just come to hand. Circumstanced as this army was, in respect to situation and strength, it was the unanimous advice of a council of general officers to give up Long Island, and not, by dividing our force, be unable to resist the enemy in any one point of attack. This reason, added to some others, particularly the fear of having our communication cut off from the main, of which there seemed to be no small probability, and the extreme fatigue our troops were laid under, in guarding such extensive lines without proper shelter from the weather, induced the above resolution. It is the most difficult thing in the world, Sir, to know in what manner to conduct one's self with respect to the militia. If you do not begin, many days before they are wanted, to raise them, you cannot have them in time; if you do, they get tired and return, besides being under but very little order or government whilst in service. However, if the enemy have a design of serving us at this place, as we apprehend they meant to do on Long Island, it might not be improper to have a body in readiness to prevent or retard their landing on the east of Haerlem River, if need be. In haste, and not a little fatigued, I remain, with great respect and esteem, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 31 August, 1776.

SIR,

Inclination as well as duty would have induced me to give Congress the earliest information of my removal,

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and that of the troops, from Long Island and its dependencies, to this city the night before last; but the extreme fatigue, which myself and family have undergone, as much from the weather since, as the engagement on the 27th, rendered me and them entirely unfit to take pen in hand. Since Monday, scarce any of us have been out of the lines till our passage across the East River was effected yesterday morning; and, for forty-eight hours preceding that, I had hardly been off my horse, and never closed my eyes; so that I was quite unfit to write or dictate till this morning.

Our retreat was made without any loss of men or ammunition, and in better order than I expected from troops in the situation ours were. We brought off all our cannon and stores, except a few heavy pieces, which, in the condition the earth was, by a long continued rain, we found upon trial impracticable; the wheels of the carriages sinking up to the hobs rendered it impossible for our whole force to drag them. We left but little provisions on the island, except some cattle, which had been driven within our lines, and which after many attempts to force across the water, we found it impossible to effect, circumstanced as we were. I have enclosed a copy of the council of war held previous to the retreat, to which I beg leave to refer Congress for the reasons, or many of them, that led to the adoption of that measure.* Yesterday evening and last night, a

* The reasons assigned in the council of war for the evacuation of Long Island were, — the great loss sustained by death and capture in the late action; the injury which the arms and ammunition had received from the heavy rains; the probability that the enemy would succeed in getting their ships up the East River, and thus cut off the communication between Long Island and New York; the weak state of the lines for resisting so large a force; the divided condition of the troops, having so many points to defend; and the expectation that the enemy's ships, now in Flushing Bay, would transport across the Sound a part of the British army, who would

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party of our men were employed in bringing our stores, cannon, and tents, from Governor's Island, which they nearly completed. Some of the heavy cannon remain there still, but I expect they will be got away to-day.

In the engagement on the 27th, Generals Sullivan and Stirling were made prisoners. The former has been permitted, on his parole, to return for a little time. From Lord Stirling I had a letter by General Sullivan, a copy of which I have the honor to transmit, that contains his information of the engagement with his brigade. It is not so full and certain as I could wish; he was hurried most probably, as his letter was unfinished; nor have I been yet able to obtain an exact account of our loss; we suppose it from seven hundred to a thousand killed and taken.* General Sullivan says Lord Howe is extremely desirous of seeing some of the members of Congress; for which purpose he was allowed to come out, and to communicate to them what has passed between him and his lordship. I have consented to his going to Philadelphia, as I do not mean, or conceive it right, to withhold or prevent him from giving such information as he possesses in this instance. I am much hurried and engaged in arranging and making new dispositions of our forces; the movements of the enemy requiring them to be immediately had; and therefore I have only time to add, that I am, with my best regards to Congress, &c.

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form an encampment above Kingsbridge. The resolution for a retreat was unanimously adopted by the officers of the council.

* According to General Howe's return of the American prisoners taken on Long Island, the whole number amounted to one thousand and seventy-six. This list includes General Woodhull, and the militia under him, probably about two hundred, who were not in the action, but were taken afterwards at Jamaica. The British loss, as stated by General Howe, was ninety-four killed and missing, and two hundred and eighty-three wounded. In nearly all the accounts of the action, Woodhull has been erroneously written *Udell*.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 2 September, 1776.

SIR,

As my intelligence of late has been rather unfavorable, and would be received with anxiety and concern, peculiarly happy should I esteem myself, were it in my power at this time to transmit such information to Congress, as would be more pleasing and agreeable to their wishes; but, unfortunately for me, unfortunately for them, it is not. Our situation is truly distressing. The check our detachment sustained on the 27th ultimo has dispirited too great a proportion of our troops, and filled their minds with apprehension and despair. The militia, instead of calling forth their utmost efforts to a brave and manly opposition in order to repair our losses, are dismayed, intractable, and impatient to return. Great numbers of them have gone off; in some instances, almost by whole regiments, by half ones, and by companies at a time. This circumstance, of itself, independent of others, when fronted by a well-appointed enemy superior in number to our whole collected force, would be sufficiently disagreeable; but, when their example has infected another part of the army, when their want of discipline, and refusal of almost every kind of restraint and government, have produced a like conduct but too common to the whole, and an entire disregard of that order and subordination necessary to the well-doing of an army, and which had been inculcated before, as well as the nature of our military establishment would admit of, — our condition becomes still more alarming; and, with the deepest concern, I am obliged to confess my want of confidence in the generality of the troops.

All these circumstances fully confirm the opinion I ever entertained, and which I more than once in my let-

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ters took the liberty of mentioning to Congress, that no dependence could be put in a militia, or other troops than those enlisted and embodied for a longer period than our regulations heretofore have prescribed. I am persuaded, and as fully convinced as I am of any one fact that has happened, that our liberties must of necessity be greatly hazarded if not entirely lost, if their defence is left to any but a permanent standing army; I mean, one to exist during the war. Nor would the expense, incident to the support of such a body of troops, as would be competent to almost every exigency, far exceed that, which is daily incurred by calling in succour, and new enlistments, which, when effected, are not attended with any good consequences. Men, who have been free and subject to no control, cannot be reduced to order in an instant; and the privileges and exemptions, which they claim and will have, influence the conduct of others; and the aid derived from them is nearly counterbalanced by the disorder, irregularity, and confusion they occasion.

I cannot find that the bounty of ten dollars is likely to produce the desired effect. When men can get double that sum to engage for a month or two in the militia, and that militia frequently called out, it is hardly to be expected. The addition of land might have a considerable influence on a permanent enlistment. Our number of men at present fit for duty is under twenty thousand; they were so by the last returns and best accounts I could get after the engagement on Long Island; since which, numbers have deserted. I have ordered General Mercer to send the men intended for the Flying Camp to this place, about a thousand in number, and to try with the militia, if practicable, to make a diversion upon Staten Island. Till of late, I had no doubt in my own mind of defending this place; nor should I have

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yet, if the men would do their duty; but this I despair of. It is painful, and extremely grating to me, to give such unfavorable accounts; but it would be criminal to conceal the truth at so critical a juncture. Every power I possess shall be exerted to serve the cause; and my first wish is, that, whatever may be the event, the Congress will do me the justice to think so.

If we should be obliged to abandon the town, ought it to stand as winter-quarters for the enemy? They would derive great conveniences from it on the one hand; and much property would be destroyed on the other. It is an important question, but will admit of but little time for deliberation. At present, I dare say the enemy mean to preserve it, if they can. If Congress, therefore, should resolve upon the destruction of it, the resolution should be a profound secret, as the knowledge of it will make a capital change in their plans.

September 4th. — Our affairs have not undergone a change for the better, nor assumed a more agreeable aspect than heretofore. The militia under various pretences are daily diminishing; and in a little time, I am persuaded, their number will be very inconsiderable. On Monday night a forty-gun ship passed up the Sound between Governor's and Long Island, and anchored in Turtle Bay. In her passage she received a discharge of cannon from our batteries, but without any damage; and, having a favorable wind and tide, soon got out of their reach. Yesterday morning I despatched Major Crane of the artillery, with two twelve-pounders and a howitzer, to annoy her, who, hulling her several times, forced her from that station, and to take shelter behind an island, where she still continues. There are several other ships of war in the Sound, with a good many transports or store-ships, which came round Long

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Island, so that that communication is entirely cut off. The Admiral, with the main body of the fleet, is close in with Governor's Island. Judging it expedient to guard against every contingency, as far as our peculiar situation will admit, and that we may have resources left if obliged to abandon this place, I have sent away and am removing above Kingsbridge, all our stores that are unnecessary, and that will not be immediately wanted.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MERCER.

New York, 3 September, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

From the present complexion of our affairs, it appears to me, that the most salutary consequences may result from our having a strong encampment at the post on the Jersey side of the North River, opposite to Mount Washington, and that it is of the utmost importance. I therefore think it advisable, and highly necessary, that you detach such a force from Amboy and its dependencies under the command of an officer of note, authority, and influence, with a skilful engineer to lay out such additional works, as may be judged essential and proper, and the situation of the ground will admit of. They should be begun and carried on with all possible diligence and despatch.

It will be necessary, that a considerable quantity of provision should be collected for the maintenance and support of the camp; and for this purpose I wish you to have proper measures adopted to procure it, and have it deposited there and at places of security not far distant. As the Continental officers now at this post will probably take rank and command of any one you may send,

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unless he should be a general officer, I wish, if you have one that possibly can be spared, and in whose judgment, activity, and fortitude you can rely, that he may be appointed to the command, rather than an officer of inferior rank. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 6 September, 1776.

SIR,

I was last night honored with your favor of the 3d, with sundry resolutions of Congress; and perceiving it to be their opinion and determination, that no damage shall be done to the city in case we are obliged to abandon it, I shall take every measure in my power to prevent it.* Since my letter of the 4th, nothing very material has occurred, unless it is that the fleet seem to be drawing more together, and all getting close in with Governor's Island. Their designs we cannot learn; nor have we been able to procure the least information of late, of any of their plans or intended operations.

As the enemy's movements are very different from what we expected, and, from their large encampments a considerable distance up the Sound, there is reason to believe they intend to make a landing above or below Kingsbridge, and thereby to hem in our army, and cut off the communication with the country, I mean to call a council of general officers to-day or to-morrow, and

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* "*In Congress, September 3d.*—Resolved, that General Washington be acquainted, that Congress would have special care taken, in case he should find it necessary to quit New York, that no damage be done to the said city by his troops on their leaving it; the Congress having no doubt of their being able to recover the same, though the enemy should for a time obtain possession of it."

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endeavour to digest and fix upon some regular and certain system of conduct to be pursued in order to baffle their efforts and counteract their schemes; and also to determine as to the expediency of evacuating or attempting to maintain the city and the several posts on this island. Of the result of their opinion and deliberations I shall advise Congress by the earliest opportunity, which will be by express, having it not in my power to communicate any intelligence by post, as the office is removed to so great a distance, and entirely out of the way.*

I have enclosed a list of the officers, who are prisoners, and from whom letters have been received by a flag. We know there are others not included in the list. General Sullivan having informed me, that General Howe was willing that an exchange of him for General Prescott should take place, it will be proper to send General Prescott immediately, that it may be effected.

As the militia regiments in all probability will be impatient to return, and become pressing for their pay, I shall be glad of the direction of Congress, whether they are to receive it here or from the Conventions or Assemblies of the respective States to which they belong. On the one hand, the settlement of their abstracts will be attended with trouble and difficulty; on the other, they will go away much better satisfied, and be more ready to give their aid in future, if they are paid before their departure. Before I conclude, I must take the liberty of mentioning to Congress the great distress we are in for want of money. Two months' pay (and more to some battalions) is now due to the troops here, without any thing in the military chest to satisfy it. This occasions much dissatisfaction, and almost a general uneasi-

* The post-office had been removed up Hudson's River to Dobbs's Ferry.

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ness. Not a day passes without complaints, and the most importunate and urgent demands, on this head. As it may injure the service greatly, and the want of a regular supply of cash produce consequences of the most fatal tendency, I entreat the attention of Congress to this subject, and that we may be provided as soon as can be with a sum equal to every present claim.

I have written to General Howe, proposing an exchange of General McDonald for Lord Stirling,* and shall be extremely happy to obtain it, as well as that of General Sullivan for General Prescott, being greatly in want of them, and under the necessity of appointing, *pro tempore*, some of the colonels to command brigades.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

New York, 6 September, 1776.

SIR,

I have been honored with your favor of the 31st ultimo, and am extremely obliged by the measures you are taking, in consequence of my recommendatory letter. The exertions of Connecticut upon this, as well as upon every other occasion, do the inhabitants great honor, and I hope will be attended with successful and happy consequences. In respect to the mode of conduct to be pursued by the troops, that go over to the island, I can-

* General Donald McDonald had been captured by Colonel Caswell, the day after the action of Moore's Creek Bridge, in North Carolina, February 27th. He commanded a party of Royalists, chiefly Scotch Highlanders, who were defeated in the above action by the North Carolina militia under the command of General Moore and Colonel Caswell. Twenty-five officers taken at the same time, including General McDonald, were brought to Philadelphia, and after being examined by the Committee of Safety, were confined in jail.

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not lay down any certain rule; it must be formed and governed by circumstances, and the direction of those who command them.

I should have done myself the honor of transmitting to you an account of the engagement between a detachment of our troops and the enemy on Long Island, and of our retreat from thence, before now, had it not been for the multiplicity of business I have been involved in ever since; and, being still engaged, I cannot enter upon a minute and particular detail of the affair. I shall only add, therefore, that we lost, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, from seven hundred to one thousand men. Among the prisoners are General Sullivan and Lord Stirling. The enclosed list will show you the names of many of the officers that are prisoners. The action was chiefly with the troops from Jersey, Pennsylvania, the Lower Counties, and Maryland, and Colonel Huntington's regiment. They suffered greatly, being attacked and overpowered by numbers of the enemy greatly superior to them. The enemy's loss we have not been able to ascertain; but we have reason to believe it was considerable, as the engagement was warm, and conducted with great resolution and bravery on the part of our troops. During the engagement, a deep column of the enemy descended from the woods, and attempted an impression upon our lines, but retreated immediately on the discharge of a cannon and part of the musketry from the line nearest to them. As the main body of the enemy had encamped not far from our lines, and as I had reason to believe, that they intended to force us from them by regular approaches, which the nature of the ground favored extremely, and at the same time meant, by the ships of war, to cut off the communication between the city and island, and by that means keep our men divided and unable to oppose them any-

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where; by the advice of the general officers, on the night of the 29th, I withdrew our troops from thence, without any loss of men and but little of baggage.*

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, New York, 8 September, 1776.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you, I have called a council of the general officers, in order to take a full and comprehensive view of our situation, and thereupon form such a plan of future defence as may be immediately pursued, and subject to no other alteration, than a change of operations on the enemy's side may occasion. Before the landing of the enemy in Long Island, the point of attack could not be known, nor any satisfactory judgment formed of their intentions. It might be on Long Island, on Bergen, or directly on the city. This made it necessary to be prepared for each, and has occasioned an expense of labor, which now seems useless, and is regretted by those, who form a judgment from after-knowledge. But I trust, that men of discernment will think differently, and see that by such works and preparations we have not only delayed the operations of the campaign, till it is too late to effect any capital incursion into the country, but have drawn the enemy's forces to one point, and obliged them to decline their plan, so as to enable us to form our defence on some certainty.

It is now extremely obvious from all intelligence,

* In describing this event a few days afterwards, General Greene wrote; —"I was sick when the army retreated from Long Island, which was the best effected retreat I ever read or heard of, considering the difficulties."

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from their movements, and every other circumstance, that, having landed their whole army on Long Island, except about four thousand on Staten Island, they mean to enclose us on the island of New York, by taking post in our rear while the shipping effectually secures the front; and thus, either by cutting off our communication with the country, oblige us to fight them on their own terms, or surrender at discretion, or by a brilliant stroke endeavour to cut this army in pieces, and secure the collection of arms and stores, which they well know we shall not be able soon to replace. Having therefore their system unfolded to us, it became an important consideration how it could be most successfully opposed. On every side there is a choice of difficulties; and every measure on our part, however painful the reflection is from experience, is to be formed with some apprehension, that all our troops will not do their duty. In deliberating on this great question, it was impossible to forget, that history, our own experience, the advice of our ablest friends in Europe, the fears of the enemy, and even the declarations of Congress, demonstrate, that on our side the war should be defensive (it has even been called a war of posts), that we should on all occasions avoid a general action, nor put any thing to risk, unless compelled by a necessity into which we ought never to be drawn.

The arguments on which such a system was founded were deemed unanswerable; and experience has given her sanction. With these views, and being fully persuaded, that it would be presumption to draw out our young troops into open ground against their superiors both in number and discipline, I have never spared the spade and pickaxe. I confess I have not found that readiness to defend even strong posts at all hazards, which is necessary to derive the greatest benefit from

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them. The honor of making a brave defence does not seem to be a sufficient stimulus, when success is very doubtful, and the falling into the enemy's hands probable; but, I doubt not, this will be gradually attained. We are now in a strong post, but not an impregnable one, nay, acknowledged by every man of judgment to be untenable, unless the enemy will make the attack upon lines, when they can avoid it, and their movements indicate that they mean to do so.

To draw the whole army together in order to arrange the defence proportionate to the extent of lines and works, would leave the country open for an approach, and put the fate of this army and its stores on the hazard of making a successful defence in the city, or the issue of an engagement out of it. On the other hand, to abandon a city, which has been by some deemed defensible, and on whose works much labor has been bestowed, has a tendency to dispirit the troops and enfeeble our cause. It has also been considered as the key to the northern country. But as to that, I am fully of opinion, that by the establishing of strong posts at Mount Washington on the upper part of this island, and on the Jersey side opposite to it, with the assistance of the obstructions already made, and which may be improved, in the water, not only the navigation of Hudson's River, but an easier and better communication may be more effectually secured between the northern and southern states.* This, I believe, every one acquainted with the situation of the country will readily

* It is a little remarkable, that this opinion should be advanced so strongly, after the successful experiments made by the British ships in passing up both the North and East Rivers, with scarcely any injury from the batteries on the shore. Subsequent events proved, that neither the obstructions in the water, nor the fortified posts on land, presented any essential obstacles to the armed vessels ascending the river.

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agree to; and it will appear evident to those, who have an opportunity of recurring to good maps. These and many other consequences, which will be involved in the determination of our next measure, have given our minds full employ, and led every one to form a judgment as the various objects presented themselves to his view.

The post at Kingsbridge is naturally strong, and is pretty well fortified; the heights about it are commanding, and might soon be made more so. These are important objects, and I have attended to them accordingly. I have also removed from the city all the stores and ammunition, except what was absolutely necessary for its defence, and made every other disposition that did not essentially interfere with that object, carefully keeping in view, until it should be absolutely determined on full consideration, how far the city was to be defended at all events. In resolving points of such importance, many circumstances peculiar to our own army also occur. Being only provided for a summer's campaign, their clothes, shoes, and blankets will soon be unfit for the change of weather, which we every day feel. At present we have not tents for more than two-thirds, many of them old and worn out; but, if we had a plentiful supply, the season will not admit of continuing in them long. The case of our sick is also worthy of much consideration. Their number, by the returns, forms at least one-fourth of the army. Policy and humanity require that they should be made as comfortable as possible.

With these and many other circumstances before them, the whole council of general officers met yesterday in order to adopt some general line of conduct to be pursued at this important crisis. I intended to procure their separate opinions on each point, but time would

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not admit. I was therefore obliged to collect their sense more generally, than I could have wished. All agreed that the town would not be tenable, if the enemy resolved to bombard and cannonade it; but the difficulty attending a removal operated so strongly, that a course was taken between abandoning it totally and concentring our whole strength for its defence; nor were some a little influenced in their opinion, to whom the determination of Congress was known, against an evacuation totally, as they were led to suspect Congress wished it to be maintained at every hazard. It was concluded to arrange the army under three divisions; five thousand to remain for the defence of the city; nine thousand at Kingsbridge and its dependencies, as well to possess and secure those posts, as to be ready to attack the enemy, who are moving eastward on Long Island, if they should attempt to land on this side; the remainder to occupy the intermediate space, and support either; that the sick should be immediately removed to Orangetown, and barracks be prepared at Kingsbridge with all expedition to cover the troops.

There were some general officers, in whose judgment and opinion much confidence is to be reposed, that were for a total and immediate removal from the city, urging the great danger of one part of the army being cut off, before the other can support it, the extremities being at least sixteen miles apart; that our army, when collected, is inferior to the enemy; that they can move with their whole force to any point of attack, and consequently must succeed by weight of numbers, if they have only a part to oppose them; that, by removing from hence, we deprive the enemy of the advantage of their ships, which will make at least one half of the force to attack the town; that we should keep the enemy at bay, put nothing to hazard, but at all events keep

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the army together, which may be recruited another year; that the unspent stores will also be preserved; and, in this case, the heavy artillery can also be secured. But they were overruled by a majority, who thought for the present a part of our force might be kept here, and attempt to maintain the city a while longer.*

I am sensible a retreating army is encircled with difficulties; that declining an engagement subjects a general to reproach; and that the common cause may be affected by the discouragement it may throw over the minds of many. Nor am I insensible of the contrary effects, if a brilliant stroke could be made with any probability of success, especially after our loss upon Long Island. But, when the fate of America may be at

* General Greene strenuously urged an immediate evacuation of the city. Two days before the council of war assembled, he wrote to General Washington a letter, from which are taken the following extracts.

"The object under consideration is, whether a general and speedy retreat from this island is necessary or not. To me it appears the only eligible plan to oppose the enemy successfully, and secure ourselves from disgrace. I think we have no object on this side of Kingsbridge. Our troops are now so scattered, that one part may be cut off before the others can come to their support. In this situation, suppose the enemy should send up the North River several ships of force, and a number of transports at the same time, and effect a landing between the town and the middle division of the army; that another party from Long Island should land directly opposite; and that these two parties should form a line across the island and intrench themselves. The two flanks of this line could be easily supported by the shipping. The centre, fortified with the redoubts, would render it very difficult, if not impossible, to cut our way through. At the time the enemy are executing this movement, they will be able to make sufficient diversions, if not real lodgments, to render it impossible for the centre and upper divisions of the army to afford any assistance here. Should this event take place, and, by the by, I do not think it very improbable, your Excellency will be reduced to that situation, which every prudent general would wish to avoid; that is, of being obliged to fight the enemy at a disadvantage or submit.

"It has been agreed, that the city of New York would not be tenable if the enemy should get possession of Long Island and Governor's Island. They are now in possession of both these places. Notwithstanding, I think we might hold it for some time; but the annoyance must be so great,

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stake on the issue, when the wisdom of cooler moments and experienced men have decided, that we should protract the war if possible, I cannot think it safe or wise to adopt a different system, when the season for action draws so near to a close. That the enemy mean to winter in New York, there can be no doubt; that, with such an armament, they can drive us out, is equally clear. The Congress having resolved, that it should not be destroyed, nothing seems to remain, but to determine the time of their taking possession. It is our interest and wish to prolong it as much as possible, provided the delay does not affect our future measures.

The militia of Connecticut is reduced from six thousand to less than two thousand, and in a few days will

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as to render it an unfit place to quarter troops in. If we should hold it, we must hold it to a great disadvantage. The city and island of New York are no objects for us; we are not to put them in competition with the general interest of America. Two thirds of the property of the city and the suburbs belong to the Tories. We have no very great reason to run any considerable risk for its defence. If we attempt to hold the city and island, and should not be able to do it finally, we shall be wasting time unnecessarily, and betray a defect of judgment, if no worse misfortune attend us. I give it as my opinion, that a general and speedy retreat is absolutely necessary, and that the honor and interest of America require it. I would burn the city and suburbs, and that for the following reasons. If the enemy gets possession of the city, we never can recover the possession, without a superior naval force. It will deprive the enemy of an opportunity of barracking their whole army together, which, if they could do it, would be a very great security. It will deprive them of a general market; the prices of things would prove a temptation to our people to supply them for the sake of gain, in direct violation of the laws of their country. All these advantages would result from the destruction of the city, and not one benefit can arise to us from its preservation, that I can conceive. If the city once gets into the enemy's hands, it will be at their mercy either to save or destroy it, after they have made what use of it they think proper.

"If my zeal has led me to say more than I ought, I hope my good intentions may atone for the offence. I shall only add, that these sentiments are not dictated by fear, nor by any apprehensions of personal danger, but are the result of a cool and deliberate survey of our situation, and the measures necessary to extricate ourselves from our present difficulties. I have said nothing at all about the temper and disposition of the troops, and

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be merely nominal. The arrival of some Maryland troops from the Flying Camp has in a great degree supplied the loss of men; but the ammunition they have carried away will be a loss sensibly felt. The impulse for going home was so irresistible, that it answered no purpose to oppose it. Though I would not discharge them, I have been obliged to acquiesce; and it affords one more melancholy proof, how delusive such dependences are.

September 11th. — The mode of negotiation pursued by Lord Howe I did not approve of; but as General Sullivan was sent out upon the business, and with a message to Congress, I could not conceive myself at liberty to interfere in the matter, as he was in the character of a prisoner, and totally subject to their power and direction.* By my letter of the 8th you would perceive, that several of the council were for holding the town, conceiving it practicable for some time. Many of them now, upon seeing our divided state, have altered their opinion, and allow the expediency and necessity

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their apprehensions about being sold. This is a strong intimation, that it will be difficult to get such troops to behave with proper spirit in time of action, if we should be attacked." — *MS. Letter, September 5th.*

* When General Sullivan reached Philadelphia, he was directed by Congress to present to them in writing the message from Lord Howe. This was done, and, after much debate on the subject, Congress resolved, that General Sullivan should be requested to inform Lord Howe, "that this Congress, being the representatives of the free and independent States of America, cannot with propriety send any of their members to confer with his Lordship in their private characters, but that, ever desirous of establishing peace on reasonable terms, they will send a Committee of their body to know whether he has any authority to treat with persons authorized by Congress for that purpose in behalf of America, and what that authority is, and to hear such propositions as he shall think fit to make respecting the same." — *Journals, September 5th.* The President of Congress was also desired to write to General Washington, and acquaint him, that no proposals for peace ought to be attended to, unless made in writ-

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of concentring our whole force, or drawing it more together. Convinced of the propriety of this measure, I am ordering our stores away, except such as may be absolutely necessary to keep as long as any troops remain; that, if an evacuation of the city becomes inevitable, which certainly must be the case, there may be as little to remove as possible. I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, New York, 9 September, 1776.

SIR,

I am sorry to say, that, from the best information we have been able to obtain, the people on Long Island have, since our evacuation, gone generally over to the enemy, and made such concessions as have been required; some through compulsion, I suppose, but more from inclination. As a diversion upon the Island has been impracticable under these circumstances, I think you have done well in assisting the removal of the per-

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ing, and addressed to the representatives of the States in Congress. General Sullivan was sent back to Lord Howe with a copy of the above resolve; Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Edward Rutledge were appointed a Committee to carry its last clause into effect. They had an interview with Lord Howe on Staten Island, September 11th, and it is probable that the preparations for General Howe's meditated attack on the city were delayed a short time, till the result of this informal negotiation should be ascertained. See the Report of the Committee in the *Journals of Congress, September 17th.* In Lord Howe's letter to Lord George Germain, dated September 20th, giving an account of this interview, he says;— "The three gentlemen were very explicit in their opinions, that the associated colonies would not accede to any peace or alliance, but as free and independent States; and they endeavoured to prove, that Great Britain would derive more extensive and more durable advantages from such an alliance, than from the connexion it was the object of the commission to restore." – Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. VIII. p. 250.

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sons and effects of our friends from thence. I observe with great pleasure, that you have ordered the remaining regiments of the militia, that can be spared from the immediate defence of the sea-coast, to march towards New York with all expedition. I cannot sufficiently express my thanks, not only for your constant and ready compliance with every request of mine, but for your own strenuous exertions and prudent forecast, in ordering matters so, that your force has generally been collected and put in motion as soon as it has been demanded.

With respect to the militia, both horse and foot, I am of opinion that they will render us more service by rendezvousing at different places along the Sound, in West Chester county and thereabouts, than by coming directly to this city. It will not only give the enemy, who are extending their encampments up the island, an idea of our force along the coast, but if they should attempt a landing above Kingsbridge, they will be in readiness to join our force about that place; the horse particularly, whose rapid motion enables them to be in a short time at any point of attack. Besides, the difficulty of procuring forage upon this island, for any number of horses, is an objection to their being stationed here. I fear, that the militia, by leaving their homes so suddenly, and in a manner unprepared for a long absence, have sustained some injury. To this cause I must impute, in a great measure, their impatience to return, and the diminution of their numbers at this time, to about two thousand. Their want of discipline, the indulgences they claim and have been allowed, their unwillingness, I may add, refusal to submit to that regularity and order essential in every army infecting the rest of our troops more or less, have been of pernicious tendency, and occasioned a good deal of confusion and disorder. But, Sir, these things are not peculiar to those from any one

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State; they are common to all militia, and what must be generally expected; for men, who have been free and never subject to restraint, or any kind of control, cannot in a day be taught the necessity, nor be brought to see the expediency, of strict discipline.

I highly approve of your plan and proposition for raising such a naval force, as will be sufficient to clear the Sound of the enemy's ships of war. If Commodore Hopkins will join you, I should suppose it not only practicable, but a matter of certainty; and if it can be effected, many valuable and salutary consequences must result from it. As to drafting seamen from the Continental regiments, it cannot be done; as their numbers have been reduced so low already, by taking men from them for the galleys, boats, and other purposes, that some of them have hardly any thing left but the name; besides, I must depend chiefly upon them for a successful opposition to the enemy. If it can be done out of the militia, I shall not have the least objection, and heartily wish the enterprise, whenever attempted, may be attended with all possible success. Secrecy and despatch will be most likely to give it a happy issue. The enemy's ships can receive no reinforcements, but such as go round Long Island. As our works at Hell Gate prevent their sending ships that way, they are sensible of their importance, and yesterday opened two three-gun batteries to effect their destruction, but as yet have not materially damaged them, and they must be maintained if possible. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. The more the militia and horse keep on the Sound, towards Kingsbridge, the better, as they will be ready to oppose any landing of the enemy, and also to receive orders for reinforcing any posts on this side in case of necessity.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

New York, 14 September, 1776.

SIR,

I have been duly honored with your favor of the 10th, with the resolution of Congress, which accompanied it, and thank them for the confidence they repose in my judgment respecting the evacuation of the city.* I could wish to maintain it, because I know it to be of importance; but I am fully convinced that it cannot be done, and that an attempt for that purpose, if persevered in, might and most certainly would be attended with consequences the most fatal and alarming in their nature. Sensible of this, several of the general officers, since the determination of the council mentioned in my last, petitioned that a second council might be called to reconsider the propositions, which had been before them upon the subject. Accordingly I called one on the 12th, when a large majority not only determined a removal of the army prudent, but absolutely necessary, declaring they were entirely convinced from a full and minute inquiry into our situation, that it was extremely perilous; and, from every movement of the enemy, and the intelligence received, their plan of operations was to get in our rear, and, by cutting off the communication with the main, oblige us to force a passage through them on the terms they wish, or to become prisoners in some short time for want of necessary supplies of provision.†

* Congress were apprehensive, that their resolve of the 3d instant might be misunderstood, and the President informed General Washington, "that it was by no means the sense of Congress, that the army or any part of it should remain in the city a moment longer, than he should think it proper for the public service;" thus leaving the whole to his judgment.

† The petition here mentioned was signed by seven officers, General Greene's name being at the head of the list. Thirteen officers were pres-

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We are now taking every method in our power to remove the stores, in which we find almost insuperable difficulties. They are so great and so numerous, that I fear we shall not effect the whole before we meet with some interruption. I fully expected that an attack somewhere would be made last night. In that I was disappointed; and happy shall I be, if my apprehensions of one to-night, or in a day or two, are not confirmed by the event. If it is deferred a little while longer, I flatter myself all will be got away, and our force be more concentred, and of course more likely to resist them with success. Yesterday afternoon four ships of war, two of forty and two of twenty-eight guns, went up the East River, passing between Governor's and Long Island, and anchored about a mile above the city, opposite Mr. Stuyvesant's, where the Rose man-of-war was lying before. The design of their going, not being certainly known, gives rise to various conjectures, some supposing they are to cover the landing of a party of the enemy above the city, others that they are to assist in destroying our battery at Horen's Hook, that they may have a free and uninterrupted navigation in the Sound.* It is an object of great importance to them,

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ent at the council summoned in consequence of this petition, and when the question of reconsidering the determination of the former council was put, there were ten in the affirmative and three in the negative. Those dissenting were Generals Spencer, Clinton, and Heath. The opinion of General Mercer, in the first instance at least, agreed with that of those officers. Being unable to attend the council of war, he expressed the following sentiments in a letter to General Washington. "My ideas of the operations of this campaign are to prevent the enemy from executing their plan of a junction between the armies of Howe and Burgoyne, on which the expectations of the King and ministry are fixed. We should keep New York if possible, as the acquiring of that city would give *éclat* to the arms of Britain, afford the soldiers good quarters, and furnish a safe harbour for the fleet."

* The enemy had likewise transported parties of troops to Buchanan's and Montresor's Islands, and from several movements made by them, it

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and what they are industriously trying to effect by a pretty constant cannonade and bombardment.

Our sick are extremely numerous, and we find their removal attended with the greatest difficulty. It is a matter that employs much of our time and care; and what makes it more distressing is the want of proper and convenient places for their reception. I fear their sufferings will be great and many. However, nothing on my part, that humanity or policy can require, shall be wanting to make them comfortable, so far as the state of things will admit. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, at Colonel Morris's House,
16 September, 1776.*

SIR,

On Saturday about sunset, six more of the enemy's ships, one or two of which were men-of-war, passed between Governor's Island and Red Hook, and went up the East River to the station taken by those mentioned in my last. In half an hour I received two expresses, one from Colonel Sargent at Horen's Hook, giving an account that the enemy, to the amount of three or four

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was conjectured, that they intended to land near Haerlem, or at Morrisania.

* Colonel Morris's House, at which General Washington's head-quarters were now established, and at which they continued till the army retreated from New York Island, was on high and commanding ground, called the Heights of Haerlem, about three miles north of the village of that name, and a mile and a half south of Fort Washington. At this place the island is a little more than a mile wide between Hudson's River on the west, and Haerlem River on the east. The lines of the army, in a double row, extended quite across from one river to the other, over a rocky and broken surface, and were strongly fortified with breastworks, intrenchments, and *abatis*.

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thousand, had marched to the river, and were embarking for Barn or Montresor's Island, where numbers of them were then encamped; the other from General Mifflin, that uncommon and formidable movements were discovered among the enemy; which being confirmed by the scouts I had sent out, I proceeded to Haerlem, where it was supposed, or at Morrisania opposite to it, the principal attempt to land would be made. However, nothing remarkable happened that night; but in the morning they began their operations. Three ships of war came up the North River as high as Bloomingdale, which put a total stop to the removal, by water, of any more of our provision; and about eleven o'clock those in the East River began a most severe and heavy cannonade, to scour the grounds, and cover the landing of their troops between Turtle Bay and the city, where breastworks had been thrown up to oppose them.

As soon as I heard the firing, I rode with all possible despatch towards the place of landing, when, to my great surprise and mortification, I found the troops that had been posted in the lines retreating with the utmost precipitation, and those ordered to support them (Parsons's and Fellows's brigades) flying in every direction, and in the greatest confusion, notwithstanding the exertions of their generals to form them. I used every means in my power to rally and get them into some order; but my attempts were fruitless and ineffectual; and on the appearance of a small party of the enemy, not more than sixty or seventy, their disorder increased, and they ran away in the greatest confusion, without firing a single shot.*

* The conduct of General Washington on this occasion has been described, as not being marked by his usual self-command. In writing from Haerlem Heights to a friend, General Greene said;—"We made a miserable, disorderly retreat from New York, owing to the disorderly conduct

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Finding that no confidence was to be placed in these brigades, and apprehending that another party of the enemy might pass over to Haerlem Plains and cut off the retreat to this place, I sent orders to secure the heights in the best manner with the troops that were stationed on and near them; which being done, the retreat was effected with but little or no loss of men, though of a considerable part of our baggage, occasioned by this disgraceful and dastardly conduct. Most of our heavy cannon, and a part of our stores and provisions, which we were about removing, were unavoidably left in the city, though every means, after it had been determined in council to evacuate the post, had been used to prevent it. We are now encamped with the main body of the army on the Heights of Haerlem, where I should hope the enemy would meet with a defeat in case of an attack, if the generality of our troops would behave with tolerable bravery. But experience, to my extreme affliction, has convinced me that this is rather to be wished for than expected. However, I trust that there are many who will act like men, and show themselves worthy of the blessings of freedom. I have sent out some reconnoitring parties to gain intelligence, if

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of the militia, who ran at the appearance of the enemy's advanced guard. Fellows's and Parsons's brigades ran away from about fifty men, and left his Excellency on the ground within eighty yards of the enemy, so vexed at the infamous conduct of the troops, that he sought death rather than life." —*MS. Letter, September 17th.* Dr. Gordon relates the incident nearly in the same way, though a little enlarged, and, as he was in camp soon afterwards, he probably derived his information from a correct source. "The General's attempts to stop the troops were fruitless, though he drew his sword and threatened to run them through, cocked and snapped his pistols. On the appearance of a small party of the enemy, not more than sixty or seventy, their disorder was increased, and they ran off without firing a single shot, and left the General in a hazardous situation, so that his attendants, to extricate him out of it, caught the bridle of his horse, and gave him a different direction."—GORDON'S *History*, Vol. II. p. 327.

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possible, of the disposition of the enemy, and shall inform Congress of every material event by the earliest opportunity. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR COOKE.

Head-Quarters, Colonel Morris's House,
17 September, 1776.

SIR,

I received your favor by Messrs. Collins, Babcock, and Stanton, and should have acknowledged it before now, had I not been prevented by the peculiar situation of our affairs. I communicated my sentiments to those gentlemen upon the subject of your letter, and the several propositions which were before us, who, I doubt not, will make a full and due report of the same to you and your honorable Assembly. However, I shall take the liberty of adding, that the divided state of our army, which, when collected in one body, is inferior to that of the enemy, and that their having landed almost the whole of their force on Long Island, and formed a plan of cutting off all communication between that and the city of New York, which we had but too good reason to believe practicable and easy to effect with their ships of war, made it necessary and prudent to withdraw our troops from the former, that our chance of resistance and opposition might be more probable and likely to be attended with a happy issue.

I feel myself much concerned on account of your apprehensions for the town of Newport and the Island,* and should esteem myself peculiarly happy, were it in my power to afford means for their security and that of

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* Rhode Island, on which Newport is situate.

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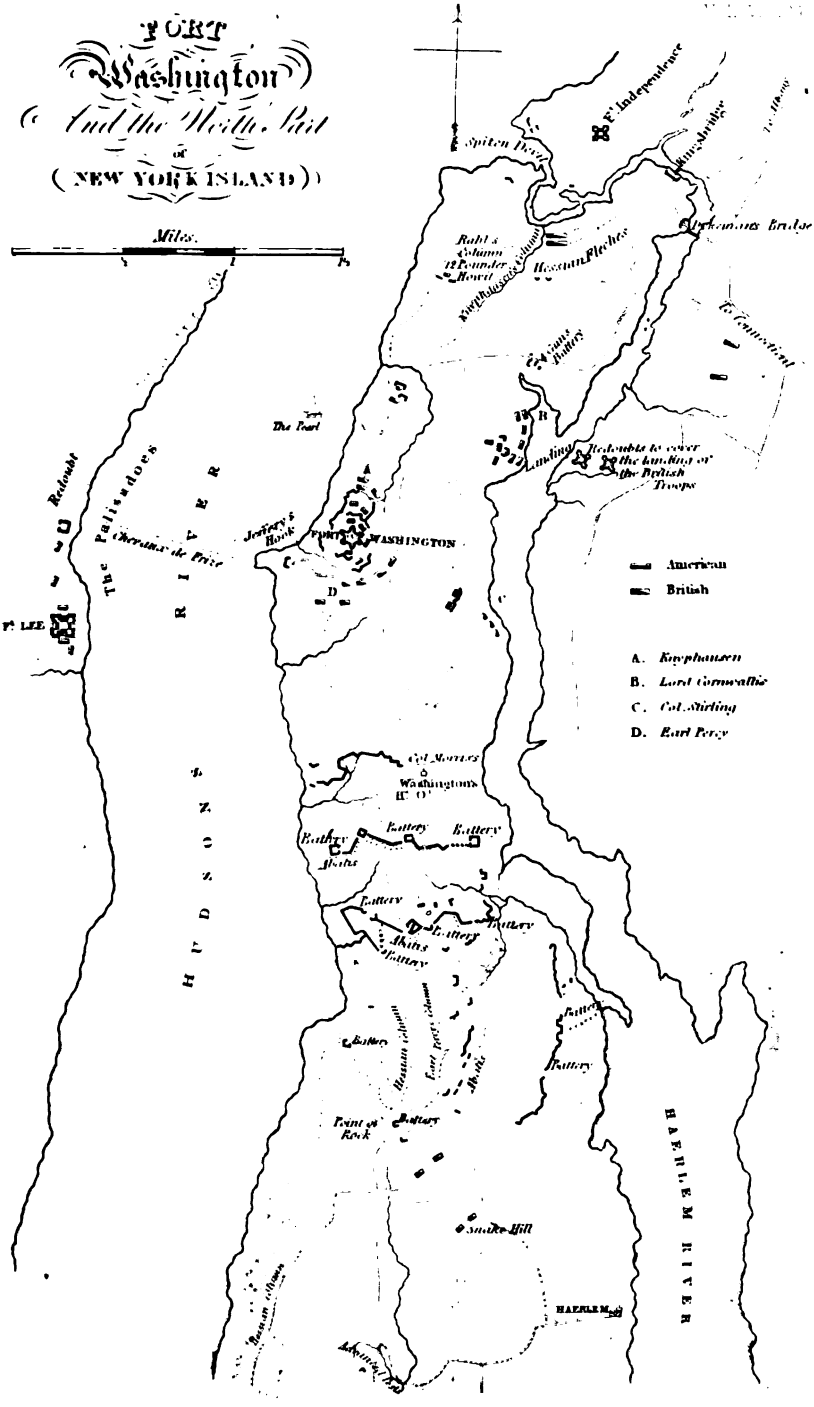

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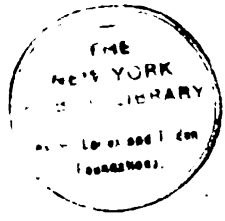

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the State in general, or to point out such measures, as would be effectual for that purpose. But it is not possible for me to grant any assistance; nor can I with propriety undertake to prescribe the mode, which will best promote their defence. This must depend on such a variety of circumstances, that I should suppose you and the Assembly, who are in the State, would be much more competent to the task, than I or any person out of it can be; and therefore I can only recommend, that you will pursue such steps as you, in your judgment, shall think most conducive to that end; observing that it appears to me a matter of extreme difficulty, if practicable, to prevent the enemy's ships from doing damage to every island accessible to them, unless the passes between them and the main are so narrow, as to oblige them to come very near such batteries, as may be erected for their annoyance, on commanding ground.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, at Colonel Morris's House,
18 September, 1776.

SIR,

As my letter of the 16th contained intelligence of an important nature, and such as might lead Congress to expect that the evacuation of New York and retreat to the Heights of Haerlem, in the manner they were made, would be succeeded by some other interesting event, I beg leave to inform them, that as yet nothing has been attempted upon a large and general plan of attack. About the time of the post's departure with my letter, the enemy appeared in several large bodies upon the plains, about two and a half miles from hence. I rode

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down to our advanced posts, to put matters in a proper situation, if they should attempt to come on. When I arrived there I heard a firing, which, I was informed, was between a party of our rangers under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton, and an advanced party of the enemy. Our men came in and told me, that the body of the enemy, who kept themselves concealed, consisted of about three hundred, as near as they could guess. I immediately ordered three companies of Colonel Weedon's regiment from Virginia, under the command of Major Leitch, and Colonel Knowlton with his rangers composed of volunteers from different New-England regiments, to try to get in their rear, while a disposition was making as if to attack them in front, and thereby draw their whole attention that way.

This took effect as I wished on the part of the enemy. On the appearance of our party in front, they immediately ran down the hill, took possession of some fences and bushes, and a smart firing began, but at too great a distance to do much execution on either side. The parties under Colonel Knowlton and Major Leitch unluckily began their attack too soon, as it was rather in flank than in rear. In a little time Major Leitch was brought off wounded, having received three balls through his side; and, in a short time after, Colonel Knowlton got a wound, which proved mortal. Their men however persevered, and continued the engagement with the greatest resolution. Finding that they wanted a support, I advanced part of Colonel Griffith's and Colonel Richardson's Maryland regiments, with some detachments from the eastern regiments, who were nearest the place of action. These troops charged the enemy with great intrepidity, and drove them from the wood into the plain, and were pushing them from thence, having silenced their fire in a great measure, when I judged

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it prudent to order a retreat, fearing the enemy, as I have since found was really the case, were sending a large body to support their party.

Major Leitch I am in hopes will recover; but Colonel Knowlton's fall is much to be regretted, as that of a brave and good officer. We had about forty wounded; the number of slain is not yet ascertained; but it is very inconsiderable. By a sergeant, who deserted from the enemy and came in this morning, I find that their party was greater than I imagined. It consisted of the second battalion of light infantry, a battalion of the Royal Highlanders, and three companies of Hessian riflemen, under the command of Brigadier-General Leslie. The deserter reports, that their loss in wounded and missing was eighty-nine, and eight killed. In the latter, his account is too small, as our people discovered and buried double that number. This affair I am in hopes will be attended with many salutary consequences, as it seems to have greatly inspirited the whole of our troops.* The sergeant further adds, that a considerable body of men are now encamped from the East to the North Rivers, between the seventh and eighth milestones, under the command of General Clinton. Gen-

* *From the Orderly Book, September 17th.* — "The General most heartily thanks the troops commanded yesterday by Major Leitch, who first advanced upon the enemy, and the others who so resolutely supported them. The behaviour of yesterday was such a contrast to that of some troops the day before, as must show what may be done where officers and soldiers exert themselves. Once more, therefore, the General calls upon officers and men to act up to the noble cause in which they are engaged, and to support the honor and liberties of their country. The gallant and brave Colonel Knowlton, who would have been an honor to any country, having fallen yesterday while gloriously fighting, Captain Brown is to take the command of the party lately led by Colonel Knowlton."

General George Clinton in describing this rencounter stated the number of privates killed to be fifteen. The action commenced at ten o'clock in the morning, and continued in the whole about four hours. — *MS. Letter September 18th.*

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eral Howe, he believes, has his quarters at Mr. Apthorp's house.

September 20th. — As the period will soon arrive, when the troops composing the present army (a few excepted) will be disbanded according to the tenor of their enlistments, and the most fatal consequences may ensue, if a suitable and timely provision is not made in this instance, I take the liberty of suggesting to Congress not only the expediency, but the absolute necessity there is, that their earliest attention should be paid to this subject. In respect to the time that troops should be engaged for, I have frequently given my sentiments; nor have I omitted to express my opinion of the difficulties that will attend raising them, nor of the impracticability of effecting it, without the allowance of a large and extraordinary bounty. It is a melancholy and painful consideration to those, who are concerned in the work, and have the command, to be forming armies constantly, and to be left by troops just when they begin to deserve the name, or perhaps at a moment when an important blow is expected. This, I am well informed, will be the case at Ticonderoga with part of the troops there, unless some system is immediately come into, by which they can be induced to stay.

September 22d. — On Friday night, about eleven or twelve o'clock, a fire broke out in the city of New York, near the new, or St. Paul's church, as it is said, which continued to burn pretty rapidly till after sunrise the next morning.* I have not been informed how the acci-

* In describing this catastrophe, the British Commander wrote to Lord George Germain, that the town was set on fire in several places, with matches and combustibles, that had been prepared with great art and ingenuity. He added, — "Many were detected in the fact, and some killed

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dent happened, nor received any certain account of the damage. Report says many of the houses between the Broadway and the river were consumed. I am, &c.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

Heights of Haerlem, 22 September, 1776.

DEAR BROTHER,

My extreme hurry for some time past has rendered it utterly impossible for me to pay that attention to the letters of my friends, which inclination and natural affection always incline me to. I have no doubt, therefore, of meeting with their excuse. With respect to the attack and retreat from Long Island, the public papers would furnish you with accounts nearly true. I shall only add, that in the former we lost about eight hundred men, more than three fourths of whom were taken prisoners. This misfortune happened in a great measure by two detachments of our people, who were posted

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upon the spot by the enraged troops in garrison; and had it not been for the exertions of Major-General Robertson, the officers under his command in town, and the brigade of guards detached from the camp, the whole must infallibly have been consumed, as the night was extremely windy. The destruction is computed to be about one quarter of the town." English writers have stated, that the Americans had determined before the evacuation to set fire to the city, and were prevented from doing it by the precipitation with which they were obliged to retire. — STEDMAN'S *History of the American War*, Vol. I. p. 208. — ANDREWS'S *History of the War*, Vol. II. p. 242. This statement, however, is erroneous, since neither the Congress nor the Council of War approved such a measure. Nor was a suspicion of this kind hinted by General Howe in his official correspondence. Although it was the opinion of General Greene, and doubtless of some others, that the city ought to be destroyed, yet no resolution to that effect was ever adopted by Washington or his Council; and if the city was set on fire by design, it must have been done without the knowledge or approbation of any responsible officer or public body.—See MARSHALL'S *Life of Washington*, Vol. II. p. 475.

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in two roads leading through a wood, in order to intercept the enemy in their march, suffering a surprise, and making a precipitate retreat, which enabled the enemy to lead a great part of their force against the troops commanded by Lord Stirling, who formed a third detachment, and who behaved with great bravery and resolution.

As to the retreat from the Island, under the circumstances in which we then were, it became absolutely necessary, and was effected without loss of men, and with that of very little baggage. A few heavy cannon were left, not being movable on account of the ground being soft and miry, occasioned by the heavy and incessant rains which had fallen. The enemy's loss in killed we could never ascertain, but have many reasons to believe, that it was considerable, and exceeded ours a good deal. Our retreat from thence, as I said before, was absolutely necessary, the enemy having landed the main body of their army to attack us in front, while their ships of war were to cut off all communication with the city, from whence our resources of men and provisions were to be drawn.

Having made this retreat, we not long after discovered, by the movements of the enemy and the information we received from deserters and others, that they declined attacking our lines in the city, and were forming a plan to get in our rear with their land army, by crossing the Sound above us, and thereby to cut off all intercourse with the country and every necessary supply. The ships of war were to coöperate, possess the North River, and prevent succours from the Jerseys. This plan appearing probable, and but too practicable in its execution, it became necessary to guard against the fatal consequences, that must follow, if the scheme were effected; for which purpose I caused a removal of a

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part of our troops and stores from the city; and a council of general officers determined, that it must be entirely abandoned, as we had, with an army weaker than theirs, a line of sixteen or eighteen miles to defend, to keep open our communication with the country, besides the defence of the city. We held out, however, every show of defence, till our sick and all our stores could be brought away. The evacuation being resolved upon, every exertion in our power was made to baffle their designs and effect our own. The sick were numerous, amounting to more than the fourth part of our whole army, and an object of great importance. Happily we got them away; but, before we could bring off all our stores, on Sunday morning six or seven ships of war, which had gone up the East River some few days before, began a most severe and heavy cannonade, to scour the grounds and effect a landing of their troops. Three ships of war also ran up the North River that morning above the city, to prevent our boats and small craft from carrying away our baggage.

I had gone the evening before to the main body of our army, which was posted about these Heights and the Plains of Haerlem, where it seemed probable, from the movements and disposition of the enemy, they meant to land and make an attack the next morning. However the event did not happen. Immediately on hearing the cannonade, I rode with all possible expedition towards the place of landing, and where breastworks had been thrown up to secure our men; and, to my great surprise and mortification, I found the troops, who had been posted there, and those ordered to their support, consisting of eight regiments, notwithstanding the exertions of their generals to form them, running away in the most disgraceful manner. I used every possible effort to rally them, but to no purpose; and, on

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the appearance of a small part of the enemy, not more than sixty or seventy, they ran off without firing a single gun. Many of our heavy cannon would inevitably have fallen into the enemy's hands, as they landed so soon; but this scandalous conduct occasioned a loss of many tents, baggage, and camp-equipage, which would have been easily secured, had they made the least opposition.

The retreat was made with the loss of a few men only. We encamped, and still remain, on the Heights of Haerlem, which are well suited for defence against their approaches. On Monday morning, they advanced in sight in several large bodies, but attempted nothing of a general nature, though there were smart skirmishes between their advanced parties and some detachments from our lines, which I sent out. In these our troops behaved well, putting the enemy to flight in open ground, and forcing them from posts they had seized two or three times. A sergeant, who deserted from them, says they had, as he was told, eighty-nine wounded and missing; but other accounts make the number of wounded much greater. Our loss in killed and wounded was about sixty; but the greatest loss we sustained was in the death of Lieutenant-Colonel Knowlton, a brave and gallant officer. Major Leitch of Weedon's regiment had three balls through his side, and behaved exceedingly well. He is in a fair way of recovery. Nothing material has happened since this skirmish. The enemy, it is said, are bringing up their heavy cannon, so that we are to expect another attack soon, both by land and water, as we are upon the Hudson, at the place where we have attempted to stop the navigation by sinking obstructions in the river and erecting batteries.

The dependence, which the Congress have placed upon the militia, has already greatly injured, and I fear

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will totally ruin our cause. Being subject to no control themselves, they introduce disorder among the troops, whom we have attempted to discipline, while the change in their living brings on sickness; this causes an impatience to get home, which spreads universally, and introduces abominable desertions. In short, it is not in the power of words to describe the task I have to perform. Fifty thousand pounds would not induce me again to undergo what I have done. Our numbers, by sickness and desertion, are greatly reduced. I have been trying these four or five days to get a return, but have not yet succeeded. I am sure, however, we have not more than twelve or fourteen thousand men fit for duty, whilst the enemy, who, it is said, are very healthy, cannot have less than near twenty-five thousand. With sincere love to my sister and the family, and compliments to any inquiring friends, I am, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, Heights of Haerlem,
23 September, 1776.

SIR,

I yesterday evening received the favor of your letter of the 21st, by your aid-de-camp Captain Montresor, in consequence of which, I this morning despatched an express to Elizabethtown, with orders that Major-General Prescott should be permitted to return in the boat, that carried General Sullivan over to that place. I most readily concur in the proposition, which you are pleased to make for the exchange of Brigadier-General Lord Stirling for Governor Montfort Brown, and have sent for him accordingly. I should hope, that Lord Stirling will

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be immediately set at liberty, on my promise that Governor Brown shall be sent to you as soon as he arrives. I had no doubt but Mr. McDonald's title would have been acknowledged, having understood, that he received his commission from the hands of Governor Martin; nor can I consent to rank him as a major, till I have proper authority from Congress, to whom I shall state the matter upon your representation.*

Agreeably to your request, I shall transmit to Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell a copy of the list of officers of the forty-second and seventy-first regiments, taken by us last spring, that it may be rectified in the instances in which it may be wrong, and I will then place opposite to their names the officers I would wish in return for them. The exchange of privates I shall take the earliest opportunity in my power to carry into execution; but their being greatly dispersed through the New England governments, in order to their better accommodation, will prevent it for some time. Having the fullest confidence in your assurance, that Mr. Lovell will be released when he arrives from Halifax, I have written for Governor Skene to come to head-quarters, that he may proceed immediately to you.

As to the exchange of prisoners settled between Captain Foster and General Arnold, I beg leave to inform you, that it was a transaction in which I had not the smallest concern, nor have I authority to give directions in any degree respecting the matter. The information you have received concerning the ill-treatment of your officers, I would fain hope, is not generally well

* The British Commander declined exchanging McDonald for a brigadier, on the ground that he had commissioned him as major; but Congress decided, that, as he had been commissioned a brigadier by Governor Martin of North Carolina, he should not be exchanged for an officer of lower rank.

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founded.* The letters from them, which have passed through my hands, hold forth a different language. In particular instances, it is true, there are some, who have been restricted to a closer confinement and severer treatment than they otherwise would have been, for breaking or refusing to give their paroles; such, I am confident, will not be countenanced by your Excellency; and I am persuaded that by a closer investigation you will discover, that there have been no other persons whatever, who have experienced the smallest harshness from us. I shall, however, obtain all the information on the subject in my power, that every ground of complaint, if any exists, may be entirely removed; it being my most earnest wish, that, during this unhappy contest, there shall be every exercise of humanity which the nature of the case will possibly admit.

Your aid-de-camp delivered to me the ball you mention, which was the first of the kind I ever saw or heard of. You may depend the contrivance is highly abhorred by me, and every measure shall be taken to prevent so wicked and infamous a practice being adopted in this army. I have the honor to be, &c.†

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* General Howe had written;—"It is with much concern, that I cannot close this letter without representing the ill-treatment, which I am too well informed the King's officers now suffer in common gaols throughout the provinces of New England. I apply to your feelings alone for redress, having no idea of committing myself by an act of retaliation upon those in my power."

† Respecting this ball, General Howe had spoken as follows in his letter. "My aid-de-camp will present to you a ball cut and fixed to the end of a nail, taken from a number of the same kind, found in the encampment quitted by your troops on the 15th instant. I do not make any comment upon such unwarrantable and malicious practices, being well assured the contrivance has not come to your knowledge."

By the following extract from a letter written to Lord George Germain by General Howe, dated September 25th, it would appear, that he was not very sanguine, as to the success of the campaign. "The enemy is too strongly posted," he writes, "to be attacked in front, and innumerable dif-

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TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, Heights of Haerlem,
23 September, 1776.

SIR,

General Howe, in a letter received from him yesterday evening by a flag, having offered to exchange Brigadier-General Lord Stirling for Governor Montfort Brown, and also requested that Governor Skene may be granted his liberty without delay, assuring me that Mr. Lovell shall be immediately enlarged, on his arrival from Halifax, whose exchange for Governor Skene has been agreed upon; I must take the liberty of requesting the favor of your notice to these two gentlemen, and that you will provide them with a proper escort to repair to head-quarters, as soon as they can, with their baggage, that the proposed exchange for Lord Stirling may be effected, and General Howe's request be complied

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ficulties are in our way of turning him on either side, though his army is much dispirited from the late success of his Majesty's arms; yet have I not the smallest prospect of finishing the combat this campaign, nor until the rebels see preparations in the spring, that may preclude all thoughts of further resistance. To this end I would propose eight or ten line-of-battle ships to be with us in February, with a number of supernumerary seamen for manning boats, having fully experienced the want of them in every movement we have made. We must also have recruits from Europe, not finding the Americans disposed to serve with arms, notwithstanding the hopes held out to me upon my arrival in this port."

The General here alludes to a letter, which he had written to Lord George Germain July 7th, soon after his arrival at Staten Island, in which he said; — "I met with Governor Tryon on board of a ship at the Hook, and many gentlemen fast friends to government attending him, from whom I have had the fullest information of the state of the rebels;" and added, "There is great reason to expect a numerous body of the inhabitants to join the army from the provinces of New York, the Jerseys, and Connecticut, who, in this time of universal oppression, only wait for opportunities to give proofs of their loyalty and zeal for government." In these anticipations, after two months' experience, General Howe found himself deceived, and he advised the minister to prepare for sending out European reinforcements for the next campaign. — See APPENDIX, No. V.

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with, respecting Governor Skene's being returned. The gentlemen are to consider themselves under parole, till such time as they are sent from head-quarters to General Howe.

I must beg your excuse, for not having written to you of late upon the situation of our affairs, and such events as have occurred in the military line. I shall only add, that the important concerns, which have commanded my closest attention, have been the cause, and, I am fully persuaded, will furnish me with a sufficient apology. Of the evacuation of the city of New York, and the retreat to this place, you will have heard before now, and of the manner in which it was conducted. I am certain, a minute relation of them would only increase the uneasiness, which would naturally arise upon hearing the events; and, therefore, as I have not time, I shall not enter upon it.

The enemy have formed a large encampment in the plains, or rather heights, below us, extending across from the East to the North River; but have attempted nothing as yet of a general nature. We are making every disposition in our power for defence, and I should hope, from the ground we are on, if they make an attack, and our men behave with tolerable resolution and firmness, that they will meet with a repulse, or at least, that any advantage they may gain will be attended with sorrow and a considerable loss. Major Leitch, who led on a detachment of the Virginia regiment in the affair of Monday, received three balls through one side; but he still retains his spirits, and seems likely to recover.* On Friday night, about eleven or twelve o'clock, a fire broke out in the city of New York, which, burning rapidly till after sunrise next morning, destroyed a great

* He soon grew worse, and died of his wounds on the 1st of October.

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number of houses. By what means it happened we do not know; but the gentleman, who brought the letter from General Howe last night, and who is one of his aids, informed Colonel Reed, that several of our countrymen had been punished with various deaths on account of it, some by hanging, others by burning; alleging, that they were apprehended when committing the act. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 24 September, 1776.

SIR,

From the hours allotted to sleep, I will borrow a few moments to convey my thoughts on sundry important matters to Congress. I shall offer them with the sincerity, which ought to characterize a man of candor, and with the freedom, which may be used in giving useful information without incurring the imputation of presumption.

We are now, as it were, upon the eve of another dissolution of our army.* The remembrance of the difficulties, which happened upon the occasion last year, and the consequences, which might have followed the change if proper advantages had been taken by the enemy, added to a knowledge of the present temper and situation of the troops, afford but a very gloomy prospect in the appearances of things now, and satisfy me beyond the possibility of doubt, that, unless some speedy and effectual measures are adopted by Congress, our cause will be lost. It is in vain to expect, that any or more than a

* The term of service for almost the whole army was to expire at or before the end of the year.

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trifling part of this army will again engage in the service on the encouragement offered by Congress. When men find, that their townsmen and companions are receiving twenty, thirty, and more dollars for a few months' service, which is truly the case, it cannot be expected, without using compulsion; and to force them into the service would answer no valuable purpose. When men are irritated, and their passions inflamed, they fly hastily and cheerfully to arms; but, after the first emotions are over, to expect among such people as compose the bulk of an army, that they are influenced by any other principles than those of interest, is to look for what never did, and I fear never will happen; the Congress will deceive themselves, therefore, if they expect it. A soldier, reasoned with upon the goodness of the cause he is engaged in, and the inestimable rights he is contending for, hears you with patience, and acknowledges the truth of your observations, but adds that it is of no more importance to him than to others. The officer makes you the same reply, with this further remark, that his pay will not support him, and he cannot ruin himself and family to serve his country, when every member of the community is equally interested, and benefited by his labors. The few, therefore, who act upon principles of disinterestedness, comparatively speaking, are no more than a drop in the ocean.

It becomes evident to me then, that, as this contest is not likely to be the work of a day, as the war must be carried on systematically, and to do it you must have good officers, there are no other possible means to obtain them but by establishing your army upon a permanent footing, and giving your officers good pay. This will induce gentlemen and men of character to engage; and, till the bulk of your officers is composed of such persons as are actuated by prin-

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ciples of honor and a spirit of enterprise, you have little to expect from them. They ought to have such allowances, as will enable them to live like and support the character of gentlemen, and not be driven by a scanty pittance to the low and dirty arts, which many of them practise, to filch from the public more than the difference of pay would amount to, upon an ample allowance. Besides, something is due to the man, who puts his life in your hands, hazards his health, and forsakes the sweets of domestic enjoyment. Why a captain in the Continental service should receive no more than five shillings currency per day for performing the same duties, that an officer of the same rank in the British service receives ten shillings sterling for, I never could conceive; especially when the latter is provided with every necessary he requires upon the best terms, and the former can scarce procure them at any rate. There is nothing that gives a man consequence and renders him fit for command, like a support that renders him independent of every body but the state he serves.

With respect to the men, nothing but a good bounty can obtain them upon a permanent establishment; and for no shorter time, than the continuance of the war, ought they to be engaged; as facts incontestably prove, that the difficulty and cost of enlistments increase with time. When the army was first raised at Cambridge, I am persuaded the men might have been got, without a bounty, for the war. After this, they began to see that the contest was not likely to end so speedily as was imagined, and to feel their consequence by remarking, that, to get in their militia in the course of the last year, many towns were induced to give them a bounty. Foreseeing the evils resulting from this, and the destructive consequences, which unavoidably would follow short enlistments, I took the liberty in a long letter to

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recommend the enlistments for and during the war, assigning such reasons for it as experience has since convinced me were well founded. At that time, twenty dollars would, I am persuaded, have engaged the men for this term. But it will not do to look back; and, if the present opportunity is slipped, I am persuaded that twelve months more will increase our difficulties fourfold. I shall therefore take the freedom of giving it as my opinion, that a good bounty should be immediately offered, aided by the proffer of at least a hundred or a hundred and fifty acres of land, and a suit of clothes and blanket to each non-commissioned officer and soldier; as I have good authority for saying, that, however high the men's pay may appear, it is barely sufficient, in the present scarcity and dearness of all kinds of goods, to keep them in clothes, much less afford support to their families.

If this encouragement then is given to the men, and such pay allowed the officers as will induce gentlemen of character and liberal sentiments to engage, and proper care and precaution are used in the nomination, more regard being had to the characters of persons, than to the number of men they can enlist, we should in a little time have an army able to cope with any that can be opposed to it, as there are excellent materials to form one out of. But while the only merit an officer possesses is his ability to raise men, while those men consider and treat him as an equal, and, in the character of an officer, regard him no more than a broomstick, being mixed together as one common herd, no order nor discipline can prevail; nor will the officer ever meet with that respect, which is essentially necessary to due subordination.

To place any dependence upon militia is assuredly resting upon a broken staff. Men just dragged from the tender scenes of domestic life, unaccustomed to the din

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of arms, totally unacquainted with every kind of military skill, (which is followed by want of confidence in themselves, when opposed to troops regularly trained, disciplined, and appointed, superior in knowledge and superior in arms,) are timid and ready to fly from their own shadows. Besides, the sudden change in their manner of living, particularly in their lodging, brings on sickness in many, impatience in all, and such an unconquerable desire of returning to their respective homes, that it not only produces shameful and scandalous desertions among themselves, but infuses the like spirit into others. Again, men accustomed to unbounded freedom and no control cannot brook the restraint, which is indispensably necessary to the good order and government of an army; without which, licentiousness and every kind of disorder triumphantly reign. To bring men to a proper degree of subordination is not the work of a day, a month, or even a year; and, unhappily for us and the cause we are engaged in, the little discipline I have been laboring to establish in the army under my immediate command is in a manner done away, by having such a mixture of troops, as have been called together within these few months.

Relaxed and unfit as our rules and regulations of war are for the government of an army, the militia (those properly so called, for of these we have two sorts, the six-months' men, and those sent in as a temporary aid) do not think themselves subject to them, and therefore take liberties, which the soldier is punished for. This creates jealousy; jealousy begets dissatisfaction; and this by degrees ripens into mutiny, keeping the whole army in a confused and disordered state, rendering the time of those, who wish to see regularity and good order prevail, more unhappy than words can describe. Besides this, such repeated changes take place, that

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all arrangement is set at nought, and the constant fluctuation of things deranges every plan as fast as it is adopted.

These, Sir, Congress may be assured, are but a small part of the inconveniences, which might be enumerated, and attributed to militia; but there is one, that merits particular attention, and that is the expense. Certain I am, that it would be cheaper to keep fifty or a hundred thousand in constant pay, than to depend upon half the number and supply the other half occasionally by militia. The time the latter are in pay before and after they are in camp, assembling and marching, the waste of ammunition, the consumption of stores, which, in spite of every resolution or requisition of Congress, they must be furnished with, or sent home, added to other incidental expenses consequent upon their coming and conduct in camp, surpass all idea, and destroy every kind of regularity and economy, which you could establish among fixed and settled troops, and will, in my opinion, prove, if the scheme is adhered to, the ruin of our cause.

The jealousy of a standing army, and the evils to be apprehended from one, are remote, and, in my judgment, situated and circumstanced as we are, not at all to be dreaded; but the consequence of wanting one, according to my ideas formed from the present view of things, is certain and inevitable ruin. For, if I was called upon to declare upon oath, whether the militia have been most serviceable or hurtful upon the whole, I should subscribe to the latter. I do not mean by this, however, to arraign the conduct of Congress; in so doing I should equally condemn my own measures, if I did not my judgment; but experience, which is the best criterion to work by, so fully, clearly, and decisively reprobates the practice of trusting to militia, that no

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man, who regards order, regularity, and economy, or who has any regard for his own honor, character, or peace of mind, will risk them upon this issue.*

No less attention should be paid to the choice of surgeons, than of other officers of the army. They should undergo a regular examination, and, if not appointed by the director-general and surgeons of the hospital, they ought to be subordinate to and governed by his directions. I am speaking of the regimental surgeons, many of whom are very great rascals, countenancing the men in sham complaints to exempt them from duty, and often receiving bribes to certify indispositions, with a view to procure discharges or furloughs; but, independent of these practices, while they are considered as unconnected with the general hospital, there will be

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* Before this letter was written, Congress had in part anticipated its objects, but without the knowledge of the Commander-in-chief. After a debate of more than two weeks, on a report made by the Board of War, it was resolved to form the army anew into eighty-eight battalions, *to be enlisted as soon as possible, and to serve during the war.* To this they had been urged by General Washington's repeated solicitations. By the length of the debates it is evident, that the resolution was carried with difficulty; such was the jealousy of a standing army. But wisdom and a sound policy at last prevailed. To encourage enlistments, a bounty of twenty dollars and one hundred acres of land was offered to each non-commissioned officer and soldier. The commissioned officers were also to receive bounties of land in the following proportions; to a colonel five hundred acres, lieutenant-colonel four hundred and fifty, major four hundred, captain three hundred, lieutenant two hundred, ensign one hundred and fifty. A certain number of battalions was assigned to each State as its *quota*. The States were to appoint all officers as high as colonels, and to fill up vacancies; and also to provide arms and clothing for their respective quotas, the expense of clothing to be deducted as usual from the soldiers' pay. All officers were to be commissioned by Congress.

To assist in carrying this plan into execution, and for other purposes relating to the army, a committee of three was appointed to repair to the camp and consult with General Washington. A circular was also written to the several States by the President of Congress, requesting their speedy attention to the new arrangement, and strenuous efforts to fill up their quotas. Another measure of great importance was likewise adopted.

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nothing but continued complaints of each other; the director of the hospital charging them with enormity in their drafts for the sick, and they charging him with the same for denying such things as are necessary. In short, there is a constant bickering among them, which tends greatly to the injury of the sick, and will always subsist till the regimental surgeons are made to look up to the director-general of the hospital as a superior. Whether this is the case in regular armies or not, I cannot undertake to say; but certain I am, there is a necessity for it in this, or the sick will suffer. The regimental surgeons are aiming, I am persuaded, to break up the general hospital, and have, in numberless instances, drawn for medicines and stores in the most profuse and extravagant manner for private purposes.*

The *Articles of War* were completely revised, or, in other words, the old ones were abolished, and a new system formed, much better suited to the state of the army, and more efficient in securing order and discipline. These were transmitted to General Washington at the same time as the resolves for new modelling the army. — *Journals of Congress, September 16th, 20th.*

The committee appointed to go to the camp consisted of Sherman, Gerry, and Lewis. On the 27th of September, Mr. Gerry wrote from Kingsbridge to General Gates, then at Ticonderoga; — "I have desired General Washington to furnish the Committee with a list of such officers in the army here, as he is desirous of having again engaged in the service, specifying the States to which they belong; and the General thinks it will be necessary to obtain the same from the northern army. The use, which we intend to make of this, is to send it by a member of Congress to the Assembly of each respective State, who is to be ordered to impress the necessity of appointing gentlemen of education to military offices, as a measure absolutely essential for saving the country; and to urge the Assemblies to apportion the men on the towns, and raise them by recruiting or drafting, that they may be in readiness for reinforcing or forming the army by the 1st of December." — *MS. Letter.*

* A resolution was passed by Congress, on receiving this letter, requesting the several States to appoint skilful surgeons and physicians to examine the surgeons and surgeons' mates, who offered themselves to serve in the army or navy, and declaring that no commission should be issued to any, who should not produce a certificate from such examiners, that they were qualified for the duties of their office.

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Another matter highly worthy of attention is, that other rules and regulations may be adopted for the government of the army, than those now in existence; otherwise the army, but for the name, might as well be disbanded. For the most atrocious offences, one or two instances only excepted, a man receives no more than thirty-nine lashes; and these, perhaps, through the collusion of the officer, who is to see it inflicted, are given in such a manner as to become rather a matter of sport than punishment; but, when inflicted as they ought to be, many hardened fellows, who have been the subjects, have declared that, for a bottle of rum, they would undergo a second operation. It is evident, therefore, that this punishment is inadequate to many crimes it is assigned to. As a proof of it, thirty or forty soldiers will desert at a time, and of late a practice prevails of the most alarming nature, and which will, if it cannot be checked, prove fatal both to the country and army; I mean the infamous practice of plundering. For, under the idea of Tory property, or property that may fall into the hands of the enemy, no man is secure in his effects, and scarcely in his person. In order to get at them, we have several instances of people being frightened out of their houses, under pretence of those houses being ordered to be burnt, and this is done with a view of seizing the goods; nay, in order that the villany may be more effectually concealed, some houses have actually been burnt, to cover the theft. I have, with some others, used my utmost endeavours to stop this horrid practice; but under the present lust after plunder, and want of laws to punish offenders, I might almost as well attempt to move Mount Atlas. I have ordered instant corporal punishment upon every man, who passes our lines, or is seen with plunder, that the offenders may be punished for disobedience of orders; and I enclose to

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you the proceedings of a court-martial held upon an officer, who, with a party of men, had robbed a house a little beyond our lines of a number of valuable goods, among which (to show that nothing escaped) were four large pier looking-glasses, women's clothes, and other articles, which, one would think, could be of no earthly use to him. He was met by a major of brigade, who ordered him to return the goods, as taken contrary to general orders, which he not only refused to do, but drew up his party, and swore that he would defend them at the hazard of his life; on which I ordered him to be arrested and tried for plundering, disobedience of orders, and mutiny. For the result, I refer to the proceedings of the court, whose judgment appeared so exceedingly extraordinary, that I ordered a reconsideration of the matter, upon which, and with the assistance of fresh evidence, they made a shift to cashier him. I adduce this instance, to give some idea to Congress of the current sentiments and general character of the officers, who compose the present army; and to show how exceedingly necessary it is to be careful in the choice of the new set, even if it should take double the time to complete the requisite number.*

* *From the Orderly Book, September 19th.* — "We are now arrived at an important crisis, which calls loudly for the zeal and activity of the best officers. We see, we know, that the enemy are exerting every nerve, not only by force of arms, but by the practice of every art, to accomplish their purposes; and among other pieces of policy, which is also founded on justice, we find them exceedingly careful to restrain every kind of abuse of private property; whilst the abandoned and profligate part of our own army, lost to every sense of honor and virtue, as well as their country's good, are by rapine and plunder spreading ruin and terror wherever they go, thereby making themselves infinitely more to be dreaded, than the common enemy they are come to oppose. The General, therefore, is determined to show no favor to officer or soldier, who shall offend herein, but to punish without exception every person, who shall be found guilty of this most abominable practice."

September 20th. — "The General hopes, that soldiers fighting in such a

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An army formed of good officers moves like clock-work; but there is no situation upon earth less enviable, or more distressing, than that person's, who is at the head of troops regardless of order and discipline, and unprovided with almost every necessary. In a word, the difficulties, which have for ever surrounded me since I have been in the service, and kept my mind constantly upon the stretch, the wounds, which my feelings as an officer have received by a thousand things, that have happened contrary to my expectations and wishes; the effect of my own conduct, and present appearance of things, so little pleasing to myself, as to render it a matter of no surprise to me if I should stand capitally censured by Congress; added to a consciousness of my inability to govern an army composed of such discordant parts, and under such a variety of intricate and perplexing circumstances;—induce not only a belief, but a thorough conviction in my mind, that it will be impossible, unless there is a thorough change in our military system, for me to conduct matters in such a manner as to give satisfaction to the public, which is all the recompense I aim at, or ever wished for.

Before I conclude, I must apologize for the liberties taken in this letter, and for the blots and scratchings therein, not having time to give it more correctly. With

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cause as ours will not be discouraged by any difficulties that may offer, and informs them, that the grounds he now possesses are to be defended at all events. Any soldier, or officer, therefore, who, upon the approach or attack of the enemy's forces by land or water, shall presume to turn his back and flee, shall be instantly shot down; and all good officers are hereby authorized and required to see this done, that the brave and gallant part of the army may not fall a sacrifice to the base and cowardly part, nor share their disgrace in a cowardly and unmanly retreat."

September 24th.—"The General does not admit of any pretence for plundering; whether it be Tory property taken beyond the lines, or not, it is equally a breach of orders, and to be punished in the officer who gives orders, or the soldier."

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truth I can add, that, with every sentiment of respect and esteem, I am yours and the Congress's most obedient, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 25 September, 1776.

SIR,

I enclose a copy of a letter received from General Howe on Sunday evening, with the lists of the prisoners in his hands, and of those in our possession, belonging to the army immediately under his command, and of my answer. His letter will discover to Congress his refusal to exchange Lord Stirling for Mr. McDonald, considering the latter only as a major. They will be pleased to determine how he is to be ranked in future. The number of prisoners according to these returns is greater than we expected. However, I am inclined to believe, that, among those in the list from Long Island, are several militia of General Woodhull's party, who were never arranged in this army. As to those taken on the 15th, they greatly exceed the number that I supposed fell into their hands in the retreat from the city.* At the time that I transmitted an account of that affair, I had not obtained returns, and took the matter upon the officers' reports. They are difficult to get with certainty at any time. In the skirmish of Monday se'nnight, they could have taken but very few.

Before I conclude, I shall take occasion to mention, that those returns made with such precision, and the difficulty that will attend the proposed exchange on ac-

* The number of prisoners returned by General Howe, as taken on the 15th and 16th of September, was three hundred and fifty-four officers and privates.

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count of the dispersed and scattered state of the prisoners in our hands, will clearly evince the necessity of appointing commissaries and proper persons to superintend in such instances. This I have taken the liberty of urging more than once, as well on account of the propriety of the measure, and the saving, that would have resulted from it, as that the prisoners might be treated with humanity, and have their wants particularly attended to. I would also observe, as I esteem it my duty, that this army is in want of almost every necessary; tents, camp-kettles, blankets, and clothes of all kinds. But what is to be done with respect to the two last articles, I know not, as the term of enlistment will be nearly expired by the time they can be provided. This may be exhibited as a further proof of the disadvantages attending the levying of an army upon such a footing as never to know how to keep them, without injuring the public or incommoding the men. I have directed the colonel, or commanding officer of each corps, to use his endeavours to procure such clothing as is absolutely necessary; but at the same time I confess, that I do not know how it is to be got. I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MERCER.

Heights of Haerlem, 26 September, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

If the troops at this post can be prevailed upon to defend it as they should do, it must cost General Howe a great many men to carry it, if he succeeds at all. If this should happen to be his opinion, there is scarce a doubt that he will turn his thoughts another way, as inactivity is not to be expected from him. To what points his operations may be directed is uncertain; perhaps an

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irruption into the Jerseys. Possibly he may bend his course towards Philadelphia, (for I conceive that two thousand men, with the assistance of their shipping, will effectually preserve New York against our whole strength,) or, which in my judgment is exceedingly probable, knowing that the troops are drawn off from the southern colonies, he may detach a part of the army to the southward for a winter's campaign, as was recommended to him last fall by Lord Dunmore.

In either of these cases, it behoves us to keep the best look-out, and to obtain the earliest intelligence possible of the enemy's motions; and, as it is now the current opinion, that the shipping are greatly thinned, I earnestly recommend to you the necessity of having sensible and judicious persons in different places to observe the movements of the shipping, among others at the Neversinks; for if they should send out a fleet without our giving notice of it to Congress, we shall be thought exceedingly remiss. In short, I entreat you to exert your best endeavours to obtain all the useful intelligence you possibly can of the enemy's motions by sea and land. In doing this, money may be required, and do not spare it. Communicate every thing of importance to me with despatch; and be assured, that I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 28 September, 1776.

SIR,

Being about to cross the North River this morning, in order to view the post opposite, and the grounds between that and Paulus Hook, I shall not add much more

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than that I have been honored with your favor of the 24th and its several enclosures.*

As Colonel Hugh Stephenson, of the rifle regiment lately ordered to be raised, is dead, according to the information I have received, I would beg leave to recommend to the particular notice of Congress Captain Daniel Morgan, just returned among the prisoners from Canada, as a fit and proper person to succeed to the vacancy occasioned by his death. The present field-officers of the regiment cannot claim any right in preference to him, because he ranked above them, and as a captain, when he first entered the service. His conduct as an officer, on the expedition with General Arnold last fall, his intrepid behaviour in the assault upon Quebec, when the brave Montgomery fell, the inflexible attachment he professed to our cause during his imprisonment, and which he perseveres in, and, added to these, his residence in the place Colonel Stephenson came from, and his interest and influence in the same circle, and with such men as are to compose such a regiment,—all, in my opinion, entitle him to the favor of Congress, and lead me to believe, that in his promotion the States will gain a good and valuable officer for the sort of troops he is particularly recommended to command. Should Congress be pleased to appoint Captain Morgan in the instance I have mentioned, I would still beg leave to suggest the propriety and necessity of keeping the matter close, and not suffering it to transpire, until he is exonerated from the parole he is under. His acceptance of a commission under his present circumstances might be construed as a violation of his engagement; and if not, the difficulty attending his exchange

* General Greene was now in command on the Jersey side of the North River.

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might be increased. The enemy, perhaps, would consider him as a field-officer, of which we have but very few in our hands, and none, that I recollect, of that rank.

I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL BENJAMIN LINCOLN.*

Heights of Haerlem, 30 September, 1776.

SIR,

Your favor of the 28th instant, acquainting me with the forwardness of the troops under your command, was this day handed to me by Major Turner. On the receipt of this letter you will please to halt your men, till you can hold a conference with General Clinton, who will meet you, and determine on a secret expedition to Long Island, which, if properly conducted, I have no doubt will be attended with success, and be exceedingly beneficial to the United States. To carry into execution the proposed plan, I must request a sufficient number of the militia from your State, making choice of such, both officers and men, as may be depended upon.

I am, &c.

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* On the 12th of September, the Assembly of Massachusetts, in compliance with a request of Congress, had ordered one fifth of the militia of the State to be drafted, except in the remote counties and seaport towns, and to be marched immediately to New York. They were to continue in service till recalled by the Assembly, and to have the same pay as the Continental troops. One battalion was sent to Rhode Island, to take the place of a Continental regiment formerly stationed there, but which had been ordered to join the army at New York. In conformity with the same requisition of Congress, New Hampshire raised one thousand men, who were formed into two regiments, and directed to put themselves under the command of General Washington, and remain till the 1st of December.

The command of the Massachusetts troops assigned for this expedition was given by the Assembly of that State to General Lincoln, who had been appointed a major-general of militia in May preceding, and had re-

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TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL GEORGE CLINTON.

Heights of Haerlem, 30 September, 1776.

SIR,

You will take with you Lieutenant-Colonel Hurlbut, and proceed immediately to Fairfield, and there in consultation with General Lincoln of the Massachusetts Bay, Mr. Hobart of this State, and Lieutenant-Colonel Livingston, if you can meet with him, concert an expedition to Long Island for the purpose of aiding the inhabitants in removing or destroying the stock and grain, which must otherwise fall into the hands of the enemy. This expedition is to be performed under the command of such officer, as General Lincoln and yourself may fix upon, and by the troops from Massachusetts Bay, aided by the three Continental companies commanded by Colonel Livingston. If there is a possibility of your seeing Governor Trumbull, without too great a loss of time, I shall much approve of your consulting him upon this occasion, previous to your concerting any plan; but if this cannot be done conveniently, you will forward my letter with your reasons for not doing so, and a request of such assistance from the State of Connecticut, as you shall find it necessary to apply for.

Despatch is essentially necessary to the success of such an enterprise, and secrecy in obtaining craft for the transportation of troops across the Sound will contribute not a little towards it. Circumstances and information must direct you, as to the number of men

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cently been put in active command of all the troops doing duty in the neighbourhood of Boston. General George Clinton, who was sent to confer with him respecting an enterprise against Long Island, was stationed at the head of the New York militia on the grounds north of Kingsbridge. He had been for several days reconnoitring the shores of Long Island Sound in the vicinity of Morrisania and Frog's Neck, and watching the motions of the enemy.

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necessary for such an expedition, and I shall not bias your judgment by any order or opinion of mine upon the occasion, but leave this matter wholly to yourselves, with earnest and best wishes for success. I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Heights of Haerlem, 30 September, 1776.

SIR,

Having received authentic advices from Long Island, that the enemy are recruiting a great number of men with much success, and collecting large quantities of stock throughout the Island for their support, I have directed Brigadier-General Clinton forthwith to repair to Fairfield to meet General Lincoln, on his march hither with a part of the troops lately voted by the Massachusetts State to reinforce this army, in order to concert with him an expedition to the Island, to check and suppress, if possible, a practice so injurious to our cause. These gentlemen will wait on you for your advice in the matter, if time and the situation of things will admit of it, and with a view of obtaining such aid as you and they may judge necessary to facilitate the enterprise. However, if it should not be in their power personally to attend you, I must take the liberty of requesting your good offices upon this occasion, and that you will afford them every assistance, that you conveniently can and they may require, either in men or vessels, for carrying their scheme into execution. It is absolutely necessary, that the measures of the enemy should be effectually counteracted in this instance, or, in a little time, they will levy no inconsiderable army of our own people. The influence of their money and their artifices has already passed the Sound, and sev-

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eral persons have been detected of late, who have enlisted to serve under their banner and the particular command of Major Rogers. Being in haste, and having the fullest confidence, that your favors will not be wanting in this instance, I have only time to add, that I have the honor to be, &c. *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 2 October, 1776.

SIR,

I do myself the honor of transmitting to you the enclosed letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Livingston, with sundry copies of General Delancey's orders, which discover the measures the enemy are pursuing on Long

* Before the battle of the 27th of August, Colonel Henry B. Livingston had been sent with a detachment of troops to the east end of Long Island, with orders to protect the well-affected inhabitants in that quarter, and prevent the enemy from landing and driving off the cattle. But after the success of the British arms near Brooklyn, parties of the enemy marched to the interior of the Island, the people generally submitted to their authority, some from inclination, others from fear; and Colonel Livingston was obliged to retreat with his remaining forces across the Sound to Connecticut. It was thought advisable to make a descent upon the Island with a larger force; but Generals Clinton and Lincoln, not finding that a body of men could be collected sufficient to warrant the enterprise upon a large scale, joined the main army in a few days without having attempted it. The project was not immediately abandoned, however, and Governor Trumbull concerted a plan with Colonel Livingston, which promised favorably at first, but was finally given up as impracticable, on account of a deficiency both of men and of water-craft to transport them across the Sound.

In one of his letters to Colonel Livingston on this subject, Governor Trumbull wrote; — "I have received intelligence, which I believe may be depended on, that Major Rogers, now employed by General Howe, and who you know was a famous partisan, or ranger, in the last war, is collecting a battalion of Tories on Long Island and from the main, many of whom have joined him at Huntington, and that he proposes soon to make a sudden attack in the night on Norwalk, to take the Continental stores, and lay waste the town. I hope we shall be able to frustrate his designs. I

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Island for raising recruits and obtaining supplies of provisions. In consequence of the intelligence they contain, and authentic advices through other channels respecting these matters, I have sent Brigadier-General George Clinton to meet General Lincoln, who has got as far as Fairfield with part of the troops lately ordered by the Massachusetts Assembly, to concert with him and others an expedition across the Sound with those troops, three companies under Colonel Livingston, and such further aid as Governor Trumbull can afford, in order to prevent if possible their effecting those important objects, and to assist the inhabitants in the removal of their stock and grain, or in destroying them, that the enemy may not derive any advantage or benefit from them.*

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have no need to apprize you of the art of this Rogers. He has been a famous scouter, or woods-hunter, skilled in waylaying, ambuscade, and sudden attack. I dare say you will guard against being surprised by him or any other party."—*MS. Letter, October 13th.*

* Oliver Delancey had received from General Howe the appointment of brigadier-general in the British army, with authority to raise a brigade of loyalists on Long Island. General Delancey issued at Jamaica a notice of his appointment, on the 5th of September, offering as an encouragement to those who would enlist, that they should be paid and subsisted in the same manner as British soldiers, and promising a captain's commission, and the power of appointing a lieutenant and ensign, to any person properly recommended, who should raise a company of seventy men. He added, that he hoped the people would cheerfully come forward in the service, as he should otherwise be obliged to fill up the companies by drafts. Thus no alternative was left, and as the inhabitants of Long Island were entirely in the power of the British, after the battle of the 27th of August, General Delancey found it no difficult task to obtain men for his brigade.

Captain Robert Mackenzie was appointed paymaster-general to the Provincial forces. He had served under Washington in the French war, and had been attached to the British army ever since. An intimate friendship early subsisted between Washington and Mackenzie, which continued to the beginning of the revolution, if we may judge from the letters that passed between them in 1774. (See the present Work, Vol. II. p. 399.) After the battle of Bunker's Hill, in which Mackenzie was wounded, he acted for some time as General Howe's secretary.

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The recruiting scheme they are prosecuting with uncommon industry; nor is it confined to Long Island alone. Having just now received a letter from the Committee of Westchester county, advising that there are several companies of men in that and Duchess county preparing to go off and join the King's army, I have given directions to our guard-boats and the sentries at our works at Mount Washington to keep a strict look-out, in case they attempt to come down the North River; also to General Heath at Kingsbridge, that the utmost vigilance may be observed by the regiments and troops stationed above there and down towards the East River, that they may intercept them, should they take that route with a view of crossing to Long Island. I will use every precaution in my power to prevent those parricides from accomplishing their designs; but I have but little hope of success, as it will be no difficult matter for them to procure a passage over some part or other of the Sound. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 4 October, 1776.

SIR,

Before I knew of the late resolutions of Congress, which you did me the honor to enclose in your letter of the 24th, and before I was favored with the visit of your Committee, I took the liberty of giving you my sentiments on several points, which seemed to be of importance. I have no doubt, that the Committee will make such a report of the state and condition of the army, as will induce Congress to believe, that nothing but the most vigorous exertions can put matters upon such a footing, as to give this continent a fair prospect of suc-

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cess. Give me leave to say, Sir, (I say it with due deference and respect, and my knowledge of the facts, added to the importance of the cause, and the stake I hold in it, must justify the freedom,) that your affairs are in a more unpromising way than you seem to apprehend.

Your army, as I mentioned in my last, is on the eve of its political dissolution. True it is, you have voted a larger one in lieu of it; but the season is late; and there is a material difference between voting battalions and raising men. In the latter, there are more difficulties than Congress are aware of; which makes it my duty, as I have been informed of the prevailing sentiments of this army, to inform them, that, unless the pay of the officers, especially that of the field-officers, is raised, the chief part of those that are worth retaining will leave the service at the expiration of the present term, as the soldiers will also, if some greater encouragement is not offered them, than twenty dollars and a hundred acres of land. Nothing less, in my opinion, than a suit of clothes annually given to each non-commissioned officer and soldier, in addition to the pay and bounty, will avail; and I question whether that will do, as the enemy, from the information of one John Marsh, who, with six others, was taken by our guards, are giving ten pounds bounty for recruits, and have got a battalion under Major Rogers nearly completed upon Long Island.

Nor will less pay, according to my judgment, than I have taken the liberty of mentioning in the enclosed estimate, retain such officers as we could wish to have continued. The difference per month in each battalion will amount to better than a hundred pounds. To this may be added the pay of the staff-officers; for it is presumable they will also require an augmentation; but being few in number, the sum will not be greatly in-

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creased by them, and consequently is a matter of no great moment. But it is a matter of no small importance to make the several offices desirable. When the pay and establishment of an officer once become objects of interested attention, the sloth, negligence, and even disobedience of orders, which at this time but too generally prevail, will be purged off. But while the service is viewed with indifference, while the officer conceives that he is rather conferring than receiving an obligation, there will be a total relaxation of all order and discipline, and every thing will move heavily on, to the great detriment of the service, and inexpressible trouble and vexation of the general. The critical situation of our affairs at this time will justify my saying, that no time is to be lost in making fruitless experiments. An unavailing trial of a month to get an army upon the terms proposed may render it impracticable to do it at all, and prove fatal to our cause; as I am not sure whether any rubs in the way of our enlistments, or unfavorable turn in our affairs, may not prove the means of the enemy's recruiting men faster than we do. To this may be added the inextricable difficulty of forming one corps out of another, and arranging matters with any degree of order, in the face of an enemy, who are watching for advantages.*

At Cambridge, last year, where the officers, and more than a sufficiency of them, were all upon the spot, we found it a work of such extreme difficulty to know their

* In a letter to General Gates, dated October 14th, General Lee expressed his opinion of Congress and of the army in a laconic but characteristic manner. "I write this scrawl," he says, "in a hurry. Colonel Wood will describe the position of our army, which, in my own breast, I do not approve. *Inter nos* Congress seem to stumble at every step. I have been very free in delivering my opinion to them. General Washington is much to blame in not menacing them with resignation, unless they refrain from unhinging the army by their absurd interference."

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sentiments, each having some terms to propose, that I once despaired of getting the arrangements completed; and I do suppose, that at least a hundred alterations took place before matters were finally adjusted. What must it be then, under the present regulation, where the officers are to negotiate this matter with the State they come from, distant perhaps two or three hundred miles, some of whom, without leave or license from me, set out to make personal application, the moment the resolve got to their hands? What kind of officers these are, I leave Congress to judge. If an officer of reputation, for none other should be applied to, is asked to stay, what answer can he give, but, in the first place, that he does not know whether it is at his option to do so, no provision being made in the resolution of Congress, even recommendatory of this measure; consequently, that it rests with the State he comes from, surrounded perhaps with a variety of applications, and influenced probably by local attachments, to determine whether he can be provided for or not. In the next place, if he is an officer of merit, and knows that the State he comes from is to furnish more battalions than it at present has in the service, he will scarcely, after two years' faithful services, think of continuing in the rank he now bears, when new creations are to be made, and men, nowise superior in merit, and ignorant perhaps of service, appointed over his head. A Committee sent to the army from each State may upon the spot fix things, with a degree of propriety and certainty; and it is the only method I can see of bringing matters to a decision, with respect to the officers of the army. But what can be done in the mean while towards the arrangement in the country, I know not. In the one case you run the hazard of losing your officers; in the other, of encountering delay, unless some method

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could be devised of forwarding both at the same instant.

Upon the present plan, I plainly foresee an intervention of time between the old and new armies, which must be filled up with militia, if to be had, with whom no man, who has any regard for his own reputation, can undertake to be answerable for consequences. I shall also be mistaken in my conjectures, if we do not lose the most valuable officers in this army, under the present mode of appointing them; consequently, if we have an army at all, it will be composed of materials not only entirely raw, but, if uncommon pains are not taken, entirely unfit; and I see such a distrust and jealousy of military power, that the Commander-in-chief has not an opportunity, even by recommendation, to give the least assurances of reward for the most essential services. In a word, such a cloud of perplexing circumstances appears before me, without one flattering hope, that I am thoroughly convinced, that unless the most vigorous and decisive exertions are immediately adopted to remedy these evils, the certain and absolute loss of our liberties will be the inevitable consequence; as one unhappy stroke will throw a powerful weight into the scale against us, enabling General Howe to recruit his army as fast as we shall ours; numbers being so disposed, and many actually doing so already. Some of the most probable remedies, and such as experience has brought to my more intimate knowledge, I have taken the liberty to point out; the rest I beg leave to submit to the consideration of Congress.*

* The strong representations, so ably urged in this letter, were duly heeded by Congress. They immediately passed a resolution recommending to the several States forthwith to send committees to the army, with authority to appoint all the officers of the regiments, which were to be raised by each State, that these officers might proceed without delay to fill

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I ask pardon for taking up so much of their time with my opinions. But I should betray that trust, which they and my country have reposed in me, were I to be silent upon a matter so extremely interesting.

With the most perfect esteem, I have the honor to be, &c.

TO PATRICK HENRY, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

Heights of Haerlem, 5 October, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

Your obliging favor of the 20th ultimo came duly to hand, and demands my best acknowledgments. I congratulate you, Sir, most cordially, upon your appointment to the government, and, with no less sincerity, on your late recovery. Your correspondence will confer honor and satisfaction; and, whenever it is in my power, I shall write to you with pleasure. Our retreat from Long Island, under our peculiar circumstances, became an act of prudence and necessity, and the evacuation of New York was a consequence resulting from the other. Indeed, after we discovered that the enemy, instead of making an attack upon the city, were endeavouring, by means of their ships and superior land force, either to

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up the regiments by new enlistments. It was likewise recommended, that, in promotions, particular notice should be taken of the abilities, activity, vigilance in the service, and attention to military discipline, by which the candidates had distinguished themselves. In compliance with the suggestion of the Commander-in-chief, a suit of clothes was granted annually to each soldier, who should enlist for the war, in addition to the bounty and pay, or twenty dollars to any soldier, who should furnish himself with the clothes. The Conventions and Assemblies of the States were requested, also, to use their utmost endeavours, that all the newly appointed officers should be men of honor and known abilities, without regard to their having before been in service. — *Journals of Congress, October 8th.*

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intercept our retreat, by getting in our rear, or else by landing their forces between our divisions at Kingsbridge and those in the town, to separate the one from the other, it became a matter of the last importance to alter the disposition of the army.

These measures, however, although of the most evident utility, have been productive of some inconveniences, the troops having become in some measure dispirited by these successive retreats, which, I presume, has also been the case among several of our friends in the country. In order to recover that military ardor, which is of the utmost moment to an army, almost immediately on my arrival at this place I formed a design of cutting off some of the enemy's light troops, who, encouraged by their successes, had advanced to the extremity of the high ground opposite to our present encampment. To effect this salutary purpose, Colonel Knowlton and Major Leitch were detached with parties of riflemen and rangers to get in their rear, while a disposition was made as if to attack them in front. By some unhappy mistake, the fire was commenced from that quarter, rather on their flank than in their rear; by which means, though the enemy were defeated and pushed off the ground, yet they had an opportunity of retreating to their main body. This piece of success, though it tended greatly to inspire our troops with confidence, has been in some measure embittered by the loss of those two brave officers, who are dead of the wounds they received in the action. Since this skirmish, excepting the affair at Montresor's Island, where Major Henly, another of our best officers, was slain, there has been nothing of any material consequence.*

* Major Thomas Henly was aid-de-camp to General Heath. He volunteered to join a party under Lieutenant-Colonel Jackson, who, on the 22d of September, with two hundred and forty men in three flat-

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Indeed, the advantage obtained over the enemy's light troops might have been improved perhaps to a considerable extent, had we been in a proper situation to make use of this favorable crisis; but a want of confidence in the generality of the troops has prevented me from availing myself of that, and almost every other opportunity, which has presented itself.

I own my fears, that this must ever be the case, when our dependence is placed on men, enlisted for a few months, commanded by such officers as party or accident may have furnished; and on militia, who, as soon as they are fairly fixed in the camp, are impatient to return to their own homes; and who, from an utter disregard of all discipline and restraint among themselves, are too apt to infuse the like spirit into others. The evils of short enlistments and of employing militia to oppose regular and well appointed troops, I strongly urged to Congress before the last army was engaged. Indeed, my own situation at Cambridge, about the close of the last campaign, furnished the most striking example of the fatal tendency of such measures. I then clearly foresaw, that such an armament, as we had good reason to expect would be sent against us, could be opposed only by troops enlisted during the war, and where every action would add to their experience and im-

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boats, made a descent upon Montresor's Island, of which the British had taken possession. The troops in one boat only effected a landing, and these were driven back with the loss of fourteen men killed, wounded, and missing. Henly behaved with great courage, but was shot just as he was entering the boat, and instantly expired. The following honorable tribute is contained in the *Orderly Book*, September 24th; — "Major Henly, whose activity and attention to duty, courage, and every other quality, which can distinguish a brave and gallant soldier, must endear him to every lover of his country, having fallen in a late skirmish on Montresor's Island, while bravely leading a party, his remains will be interred this afternoon at five o'clock, below the hill where the redoubt is thrown up on the road." This was the burial-place of Colonel Knowlton, and Henly was laid by his side.

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provement, and of whom, if they were unsuccessful in the beginning, a reasonable hope might be entertained, that in time they would become as well acquainted with their business as their enemies. This method, I am convinced, would have been attended with every good consequence; for, besides the militia being altogether unfit for the service, when called into the field, they are much more expensive than any other kind of troops; and the war could have been conducted on more moderate terms, by establishing a permanent body of forces, who were equal to every contingency, than by calling in the militia on imminent and pressing occasions.

I would not wish to influence your judgment with respect to militia, in the management of Indian affairs, as I am fully persuaded that the inhabitants of the frontier counties in your colony are, from inclination as well as ability, peculiarly adapted to that kind of warfare. At the same time, I should think it would be highly advisable, in case you should conceive yourselves to be in danger from any detachment from the British army, or from their marines, not to depend on any troops, but such as are well officered and enlisted to serve during the war.

I make no doubt, but your State has turned its views towards forming some obstacles against the enemy's ships and tenders, which may go up your rivers in quest of provisions, or for the purpose of destroying your towns. If you have depended on batteries to prevent them, without any other obstructions, a trial of the matter has taught us to believe, that it will be altogether ineffectual; as, when under sail, with wind and tide in their favor, any damage they may receive from a battery will be of very little consequence. At the same time, I must observe, that this kind of opposition is exceedingly

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proper for the defence of a town, or in any case, where it is necessary that the ships should come to anchor before the batteries, for the purpose of silencing them. In the first instance, I would strongly recommend row-galleys, which, if officered with brave and determined men, and conducted with prudence, would, in my opinion, be productive of the greatest advantage, and be the most likely means, in your situation, of securing your towns and houses, on the navigable waters, from any impression from the shipping.

I imagine, before this, Congress have made you acquainted with their resolutions for raising the new army, and that your colony is to furnish fifteen battalions to be enlisted during the war. As this will occasion the choosing a number of new officers, I would, in the most urgent manner, recommend the utmost care and circumspection in your appointments. I do not suppose that there are many experienced gentlemen now left with you, as, from what I have understood, those who have served in the last war are chiefly promoted. However, I am satisfied that the military spirit runs so high in your colony, and the number of applicants will be so considerable, that a very proper choice may be made. Indeed, the army being put upon such a permanent footing will be a strong inducement for them to step forth on the present interesting occasion. One circumstance, in this important business, ought to be cautiously guarded against, and that is, the soldiers and officers being too nearly on a level. Discipline and subordination add life and vigor to military movements. The person commanded yields but a reluctant obedience to those, who he conceives are undeservedly made his superiors. The degrees of rank are frequently transferred from civil life into the departments of the army. The true criterion to judge by, when past services do not

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enter into the competition, is, to consider whether the candidate for office has a just pretension to the character of a gentleman, a proper sense of honor, and some reputation to lose.

Perhaps, Sir, you may be surprised at my pressing this advice so strongly as I have done in this letter; but I have felt the inconveniences resulting from a contrary principle in so sensible a manner, and this army has been so greatly enfeebled by a different line of conduct, that I hope you will readily excuse me. I am, Sir, with sincere regard, your affectionate humble servant.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 5 October, 1776.

SIR,

In respect to the exchange of prisoners, I fear it will be a work of great difficulty, owing to their dispersed and scattered situation throughout the States. In order to effect it, I have written to the eastern governments to have them collected, and to transmit me an account of their number, distinguishing the names and ranks of the field and commissioned officers, and the corps they belong to. I have also written to Governor Livingston of the Jerseys upon the subject, and must take the liberty of requesting Congress to give directions, that a similar return may be made of those in Pennsylvania and Maryland, and for their being brought to Brunswick, that they may be ready to be exchanged for an equal number of those of the same rank. I observe, by the resolve of the 26th ultimo, that the exchange is particularly directed to be made of the officers and soldiers taken on Long Island. But should not that follow the exchange of those officers and men, who have lately re-

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turned from Quebec, whose imprisonment has been much longer, whose service has not been less severe, and who, in many instances, conducted with great intrepidity? I have had many applications since their arrival, by which they claim a kind of preference as far as their number and the circumstances of their rank will allow, and which I thought it my duty to mention, that I may obtain some direction upon the subject.*

You will observe by a paragraph of a letter received yesterday from General Howe, a copy of which you have at length, that the non-performance of the agreement between Captain Forster and General Arnold, by which the latter stipulated for the return of an equal number of officers and prisoners in our hands for those delivered to him, is considered in an unfavorable light and entirely imputed to me, as having the chief command of the armies of the States, and a controlling power over General Arnold. The pointed manner in which General Howe is pleased to express himself could not personally affect me, supposing there had been no good grounds for the treaty not being ratified, having been nothing more than an instrument of conveying to him the resolutions formed upon the subject; yet, as there were reasons but too just, his censure could have no weight, was it not directed against me. However, I would beg leave to observe, that, from the letters from the hostages; from what has been reported by others respecting Captain Forster's having used his endeavours to restrain the savages from exercising their wonted barbarities, though in some instances they did; his purchasing some of the prisoners for a considerable premium; but, above all, from the delicate nature of such

* It was decided by Congress, that, in the exchange of prisoners, the officers returned from Canada should have the preference to those captured on Long Island and New York Island.

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treaties, and because the non-observance of them must damp the spirits of the officers who make them, and add affliction to the misfortunes of those, whom necessity and the nature of the case force into captivity to give them a sanction by a long and irksome confinement,—I could wish Congress to reconsider the matter, and to carry it into execution. I am sensible the wrong was originally in their employing savages, and that whatever cruelties were committed by them should be esteemed their own acts; yet, perhaps, in point of policy, it may not be improper to overlook these infractions on their part, and to pursue that mode, which will be the most likely to render the hardships incident to war most tolerable, and the greatest benefits to the State. I have ventured to say thus much upon the subject from a regard to the service, and because such gentlemen of the army as I have heard mention it seem to wish the treaty had been ratified rather than disallowed.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

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* General Howe had written;—"With relation to the non-performance of your part of the agreement between Captain Forster and General Arnold, that general being immediately under your command, from your situation made known to me under your own subscription, it rests with you to see it fulfilled, agreeably to the plighted faith of the General, which, no doubt, to save his honor, he has a right to expect, or that you will return the prisoners given up by Captain Forster. Meanwhile I trust, from the declaration in your letter, that you will not allow of any delay in the exchange of the officers and soldiers in your possession belonging to his Majesty's troops. Brigadier-General Woodhull was yesterday reported to me to have died of his wounds."

General Woodhull had been recently president of the New York Convention. About the middle of August he went over to Long Island, to take command of such militia as he should find there, and assist in driving off the cattle and securing them from the depredations of the enemy. On the 27th of August he was at Jamaica, and took no part in the action of that day. Such was the disaffection of the people on the Island, that the number then under his command was not more than two hundred. A day or two after the action he was taken prisoner, and wounded in a manner at-

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TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.*

Head-Quarters, Heights of Haerlem,
6 October, 1776.

SIR,

I beg leave to inform you, that in consequence of my directions founded on your favor of the 21st ultimo, Governors Brown and Skene have arrived within the neighbourhood of this place, and will be conveyed to-morrow, between the hours of one and two, to one of the ships of war in the North River, when it is hoped that Lord Stirling will be permitted to return, as also Mr. Lovell, if he has come from Halifax.

The particular manner in which you rest upon me, by your letter of the 4th instant, a performance of the agreement between General Arnold and Captain Forster, was entirely unexpected, as I enclosed to you some time ago the resolutions of Congress upon the subject, by which you would perceive that they, to whom I am amenable, had taken upon themselves the consideration

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tended with circumstances of cruelty. It was said, that the enemy were provoked to this act by his refusing to give up his sword.

* General Howe was made a Knight of the Bath soon after the date of this letter. Lord George Germain wrote to him on the 18th of October, expressing the satisfaction of the King with his recent services, and added;—"His Majesty, being desirous, that the high sense he has of your successful endeavours to serve him should be still of greater notoriety, has thought proper to afford you a more public testimony of his royal favor, and has therefore, out of his special regard to merit, wherever it is found, been graciously pleased to nominate you to be one of the Knights Companions of the most honorable Order of the Bath." The ceremony of investiture did not take place till the 18th of January, the anniversary appointed for celebrating the Queen's birth-day, when it was performed in New York by Lord Howe, assisted by General de Heister, in the presence of a numerous assembly. There was much festivity on the occasion, and Sir William Howe gave a ball the same evening.

The Order of the Bath had been conferred on General Carleton, the British commander in Canada, on the 6th of July preceding.

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of the matter. As to the prisoners mentioned in my letter of the 23d, their exchange shall be effected as soon as the circumstances I made you acquainted with will admit of it. The enclosed note from Mrs. Delancey you will be pleased to have conveyed by the earliest opportunity. I am, Sir, with great respect, &c.

TO THE COMTE D'EMERY, GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE FRENCH PART OF ST. DOMINGO.

Heights of Haerlem, 7 October, 1776.

SIR,

I yesterday had the honor of receiving your favor of the 4th of August, and I take the earliest opportunity of testifying the pleasure I have in complying with your request, by immediately ordering the release of Monsieur Dechambault. He shall be accommodated with a passage in the first vessel, that sails from Philadelphia to the French colonies in the West Indies. Had it not been for your interposition, Monsieur Dechambault must have remained in prison till released by a cartel; but I could not hesitate to comply with a request made by a nobleman, who, by his public countenance of our cause, has rendered such essential services to the thirteen United Independent States of America, whose armies I have the honor to command. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 7 October, 1776.

SIR,

I do myself the honor of transmitting to you a copy of a letter from the Comte d'Emery, governor-general

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of the French part of St. Domingo, which I received yesterday, and also my answer, which I have enclosed and left open for the consideration of Congress, wishing that it may be sealed, if they approve of the Sieur Dechambault's releasement, which I think may be attended with many valuable consequences. If Congress concur in sentiment with me, they will be pleased to give direction for his passage by the first opportunity to the French islands; if they do not, I shall be obliged by your returning my letter. *

I have also the pleasure of enclosing a copy of a letter from Monsieur Penet, which came to hand last night, and which contains intelligence of an agreeable and interesting nature, for which I beg leave to refer you to the copy. The polite manner in which Monsieur Penet has requested to be one of my aids-de-camp demands my acknowledgments. As the appointment will not be attended with any expense, and will show a proper regard for his complaisance and the attachment he is pleased to express for the service of the American States, I shall take the liberty of complying with his requisition, and transmit to him a brevet commission, provided the same shall be agreeable to Congress. †

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* Congress approved General Washington's letter, and voted the release of Dechambault.

† Monsieur Penet was a French merchant of Nantes. He and his partner, Monsieur Pliarne, had visited General Washington at Cambridge in December, 1775, and had made arrangements with Congress for supplying the American army with munitions of war and other military stores. In a letter to Washington, dated at Nantes, August 3d, Monsieur Penet stated, that he had been successful in procuring supplies, and that he had the most flattering prospects of being able to furnish them to a large amount. He also asked it as a favor of the General, to grant him the honorary title and rank of an aid-de-camp, with the privilege of wearing the uniform, supposing this distinction might be of some service to him in rendering assistance to the Americans. How far this cheap badge of honor contributed to facilitate Monsieur Penet's operations is uncertain; but there is no doubt

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Their sentiments upon this subject you will be kind enough to favor me with by the first opportunity. The enclosed letter for the Sieur Dechambault, you will please to forward to him (if he is to be enlarged) after closing it.

I must take the liberty to observe, that I am under no small difficulties on account of the French gentlemen that are here, in consequence of the commissions they have received, having no means to employ them, or to afford them an opportunity of rendering that service they themselves wish to give, or which perhaps is expected by the public. Their want of our language is an objection to their being joined to any of the regiments here at this time, were there vacancies, and not other obstacles. These considerations induce me to wish, that Congress would adopt and point out some particular mode to be observed respecting them. What it should be, they will be best able to determine. But to me it appears, that their being here now can be attended with no valuable consequences, and that, as the power of appointing officers for the new army is vested in the several States, it will be necessary for Congress to direct them to be provided for in the regiments to be raised, according to the ranks they would wish them to bear, for I am convinced they will never be taken in, let their merit be what it may; or to form them into a distinct corps, which may be increased in time. They seem to be genteel, sensible men; and I have no doubt of their making good officers, as soon as they can learn so much of our language as to make themselves well understood; but, unless Congress interfere by their

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that very important shipments of military supplies were made to the United States, in the first years of the war, by the house of Penet and Pliarne.

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particular direction to the States, they will never be incorporated into any of the regiments to be raised; and, unless they are, they will be entirely at a loss, and in the most irksome situation, for something to do, as they now are.

October 8th. — As an exchange of prisoners is about to take place, I am induced, from a question stated in a letter I received from Governor Trumbull this morning, to ask the opinion of Congress, in what manner the States that have had the care of them are to be reimbursed the expenses incurred on their account. My want of information in this instance, or whether any account is to be sent in with the prisoners, would not allow me to give him an answer, as nothing that I recollect has ever been said upon the subject. He also mentions another matter, namely, whether such privates as are mechanics, and others who may desire to remain with us, should be obliged to return. In respect to the latter, I conceive there can be no doubt of our being under a necessity of returning the whole, a proposition having been made on our part for a general exchange, and that agreed to; besides, the balance of prisoners is greatly against us; and I am informed it was particularly stipulated by General Montgomery, that all those that were taken in Canada should be exchanged whenever a cartel was settled for the purpose. Under these circumstances, I should suppose the several committees having the care of them should be instructed to make the most exact returns of the whole, however willing a part should be to continue with us. At the same time I should think it not improper to inform them of the reasons leading to the measure, and that they should be invited to escape afterwards, which, in all probability, they may effect without much difficulty if they are at-

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tached to us, extending their influence to many more, and bringing them away also.

Yesterday afternoon the exchange between Lord Stirling and Governor Brown was carried into execution, and his Lordship is now here. He confirms the intelligence mentioned by Captain Souther, about the transports he met, by the arrival of the Daphne man-of-war (a twenty-gun ship) a few days ago, with twelve ships under her convoy, having light-horse on board. They sailed with about twenty in each, and lost about eighty in their passage, besides those in the vessel taken by Captain Souther. He further adds, that he had heard it acknowledged more than once, that, in the action of the 16th ultimo, the enemy had a hundred men killed, about sixty Highlanders, of the forty-second regiment, and forty of the light infantry. This confession, coming from themselves, we may reasonably conclude, did not exaggerate the number.

October 9th. — About eight o'clock this morning, two ships, of forty-four guns each, supposed to be the Roebuck and Phœnix, and a frigate of twenty guns, with three or four tenders, got under way from about Bloomingdale where they had been lying some time, and stood with an easy southerly breeze towards our *chevaux-de-frise*, which we hoped would have intercepted their passage while our batteries played upon them; but, to our surprise and mortification, they ran through without the least difficulty, and without receiving any apparent damage from our forts, though they kept up a heavy fire from both sides of the river. Their destination or views cannot be known with certainty; but most probably they are sent to stop the navigation, and cut off the supplies of boards, which we should have received, and of which we are in great need. They are

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standing up, and I have despatched an express to the Convention of this State, that notice may be immediately communicated to General Clinton* at the Highland fortifications, to put him on his guard in case they should have any designs against them, and that precautions may be taken to prevent the craft belonging to the river from falling into their hands.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR COOKE.

Heights of Haerlem, 12 October, 1776.

SIR,

As the situation of our affairs, and the approaching dissolution of the present army, call for every possible exertion on our part to levy a new one; and presuming that your State is about to make an arrangement of officers for the quota of troops it is to furnish, and that you may wish to know those among them, who have served with reputation and bravery, I have thought it expedient to obtain a return by such means, as seemed most likely to be well founded. To this end I have made inquiry; and the enclosed list, which I have the honor to transmit to you, comprehends the names of those, who, in public estimation, and that of the generals under whom they have more particularly acted, have behaved themselves to good acceptance, and whose past conduct gives a reasonable hope, that they will render material services to their country.

The advantages arising from a judicious appointment of officers, and the fatal consequences that result from

* James Clinton, who commanded at the Highlands in the Continental service. His brother George Clinton commanded the New York militia at this time attached to the general army.

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the want of them, are too obvious to require arguments to prove them. I shall, therefore, beg leave to add only, that, as the well-doing, nay, the very existence of every army, to any profitable purpose, depends upon it, too much regard cannot be had to the choosing of men of merit, and such as are not only under the influence of a warm attachment to their country, but who also possess sentiments and principles of the strictest honor. Men of this character are fit for office, and will use their best endeavours to introduce that discipline and subordination, which are essential to good order, and inspire that confidence in the men, which alone can give success to the interesting and important contest in which we are engaged. I would also beg leave to subjoin, that it appears to me absolutely necessary, that this business should have your earliest attention, that those, who are nominated, may employ their interest and influence to recruit men out of your troops, who are now here, and without loss of time.

In respect to the officers, who were in the Canada expedition, their behaviour and merit, and the severities they have experienced, entitle them in my opinion to a particular notice. However, as they are under their paroles, I would recommend that vacancies should be reserved for such as you think fit to promote, not wishing them to accept commissions immediately, nor to do the least act, which may be interpreted as a violation of their engagement. Their releasement, I hope, will be soon obtained, as I think them entitled to the first exchange, and this I have mentioned to Congress. I flatter myself, that the freedom I have taken in the instances above, will have the indulgence and pardon of your State, when I assure you, that the list, which you will receive, is not intended to exclude gentlemen of greater merit, nor transmitted with other views, than to

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assist you, and promote the general good; and, also, that the measure has been recommended by a Committee of Congress, who were pleased to honor me with a visit. I have done the same for Governor Trumbull, at his particular request; and the officers are making out a return, to be laid before the Massachusetts Assembly, of the same nature, so far as it concerns the officers of their State. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Heights of Haerlem, 12 October, 1776.

SIR,

The enclosed copy of a letter received last night from the Convention of this State will show you the apprehensions they are under, on account of the disaffected among them. I have ordered up a part of the militia from Massachusetts under General Lincoln, to prevent, if possible, the consequences, which they suggest may happen, and which there is reason to believe the conspirators have in contemplation. I am persuaded, that they are upon the eve of breaking out, and that they will leave nothing unessayed, that will distress us and favor the designs of the enemy, as soon as their schemes are ripe for it.

October 13th. — Yesterday the enemy landed at Frog's Point, about nine miles from hence, further up the Sound. Their number we cannot ascertain, as they have not advanced from the Point, which is a kind of island, but the water that surrounds it is fordable at low tide. I have ordered works to be thrown up at the passes from the Point to the main. From the great number of sloops and schooners, and nine ships, that went

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up the Sound in the evening, full of men, and from the information of two deserters, who came over last night, I have reason to believe that the greatest part of their army has moved upwards or is about to do it, pursuing their original plan of getting in our rear, and cutting off our communication with the country. The grounds from Frog's Point are strong and defensible, being full of stone fences, both along the road and across the adjacent fields, which will render it difficult for artillery, or indeed a large body of foot to advance in any regular order, except through the main road. Our men, who are posted on the passes, seemed to be in great spirits when I left them last night.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Heights of Haerlem, 15 October, 1776.

SIR,

Every day's intelligence from the Convention of this State mentions plots and conspiracies, which are in agitation among the disaffected. The enclosed copy of a

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* It being now manifest, that the main body of the army must move from New York Island, the troops were on the 15th arranged in four divisions, under the command respectively of Major-Generals Lee, Heath, Sullivan, and Lincoln. Head-quarters remained at Haerlem Heights, as appears by the Orderly Book, till the 21st, and were established at White Plains on the 23d, although the army moved slowly along the high grounds on the west side of the river Brunx, keeping in advance of General Howe on the east side.

The enemy had contrived to equip a body of cavalry, with horses brought from England and others taken in the country, which was looked upon with some degree of apprehension by the American soldiers, as may be inferred from an order issued by the Commander-in-chief at White Plains.

"The General, observing that the army seems unacquainted with the

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letter, which I received yesterday from Robert R. Livingston, one of the members, and who is also of the Continental Congress, will show you his ideas of the situation of affairs in this government, and their apprehensions of insurrections. The observations he has been pleased to favor me with, through the whole of his letter, seem to me but too well founded. The movements of the enemy, their having sent up some of their ships in the North River, their landing a large proportion if not the main body of their army on Frog's Point, and the information of deserters, — all these afford a strong presumption, nay, almost a certainty, that they are pursuing their original plan of getting in our rear and cutting off all our supplies. Our situation here is not exactly the same as it was at New York. It is rather better. However, as we are obliged to divide our force and guard every probable place of attack as well as we can, as most of our stores are here and about Kingsbridge, and the preservation of the communication with the States on the other side of Hudson's River is a matter of great importance, it will not be possible for me to detach any more assistance, than what I have already done, for the purpose of securing the passes in

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enemy's horse, and that when any parties meet with them, they do not oppose them with the same alacrity, which they show in other cases, thinks it necessary to inform the officers and soldiers, that, in such a broken country full of stone walls, no enemy is more to be despised, as they cannot leave the road; so that any party attacking them may be sure to do it to advantage by taking post in the woods by the roads, or along the stone walls, where they will not venture to follow them; and, as an encouragement to any brave parties, who will endeavour to surprise some of them, the General offers one hundred dollars for every trooper, with his horse and accoutrements, who shall be brought in, and so in proportion for any part, to be divided according to the rank and pay of the party." — *Orderly Book, October 27th.* General Howe observed the effect of cavalry, and in his despatches he advised the minister to send out a reinforcement of this description of troops for the next campaign.

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the Highlands. I have sent Colonel Tash, lately from New Hampshire, with his regiment upon the business; and as it is of the utmost consequence to possess those passes, and to hold them free and open, I would beg leave to submit to your consideration, whether you can spare any aid upon this interesting occasion. I know your exertions already are great; I know you have a large number of men engaged in the service, in this and the northern army; and nothing could have induced me to mention this matter to you, were it not for the alarming and melancholy consequences, which would result from the enemy's possessing themselves of those communications. The regiment I have ordered up is to receive directions from the Convention, as to the posts it will occupy, supposing them to be much better acquainted with the places, where it should be stationed, than I am. If it is in your power to afford any assistance, you will be pleased to give such instructions to those, whom you may send, as you shall judge necessary. I am just despatching to the Convention an engineer to throw up some small works. I have sent two regiments of the Massachusetts militia up the river, to watch the motions of the ships, and to oppose any landing of men, that they may attempt. I am also extending every part of my force, that I possibly can, towards East and West Chester, to oppose the enemy and prevent their effecting their plan, if it shall be practicable. I am, &c.*

* Colonel Harrison, the secretary to General Washington, wrote to the President of Congress, October 17th; — "I am directed by his Excellency to acquaint you, that we are again obliged to change our disposition, to counteract the operations of the enemy. Declining an attack upon our front, they have drawn the main body of their army to Frog's Point, with a design of hemming us in, and drawing a line in our rear. To prevent the consequences, which would but too probably follow the execution of their scheme, the general officers determined yesterday, that our forces must be taken from hence, and extended towards East and West Chester,

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Head-Quarters, Valentine's Hill,
22 October, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

From my remote situation, and my ignorance of the country in which the army under your command to the northward is to act, it is impossible for me to give my peremptory orders, or scarcely my opinion, as to the direction of matters in your quarter. I am confident your own good sense, zeal, and activity will suggest to you the most probable means of making amends for the heavy loss we have sustained by the destruction of General Arnold's fleet upon Lake Champlain; but my experience of the many evils attending the calling in of a considerable body of raw militia obliges me to give

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so as to out-flank them. General Lee, who arrived on Monday, has strongly urged the absolute necessity of the measure. It is proposed to leave a garrison at Fort Washington, and to maintain it if possible, in order to preserve the communication with the Jerseys. They are landing their artillery and wagons upon the Point; and there are now several boats passing up the Sound, full of men."

From the Proceedings of the Council of War, October 16th. — "After much consideration and debate, the following question was put; 'Whether, it having appeared, that the obstructions in the North River have proved insufficient, and that the enemy's whole force is in our rear at Frog's Point, it is now deemed possible in our present situation to prevent the enemy from cutting off the communication with the country, and compelling us to fight them at all disadvantages, or surrender prisoners at discretion?' Agreed, with but one dissenting voice, namely, General Clinton, that it is not possible to prevent the communication from being cut off, and that one of the consequences mentioned in the question must certainly follow. Agreed, that Fort Washington be retained as long as possible."

This last decision appears to have been partly in consequence of a resolve of Congress, passed five days before, desiring General Washington, "by every art, and at whatever expense, to obstruct effectually the navigation of the river between Fort Washington and Mount Constitution, as well to prevent the regress of the enemy's frigates lately gone up, as to hinder them from receiving succour."

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you my sentiments upon that head, and to tell you, that I fear they will render you more disservice than any real good. From their want of every necessary for a camp, when they join a regular army, they commit an intolerable waste of stores, which once put into their hands can scarcely be regained, and are so much dead loss to the public; and for want of regularity in their drafts of ammunition, provision, and other necessaries, they consume much more than it is convenient to spare from a garrison even near a source of supplies, much less from one at such a distance, that it requires every exertion to keep up the magazines in the best of times.

I have been informed, that Ticonderoga, properly garrisoned and supplied with provision and ammunition, is almost impregnable, even at a season of the year when an army can lie before it with the greatest conveniency. If so, instead of calling up a number of useless hands and mouths, for such I deem the militia generally, I would advise the collecting of as much provision as can possibly be got together, which, if sufficient for nine thousand effective men, of which number your army consisted by General Arnold's letter, I should imagine you could keep Burgoyne and Carleton at bay, till the rigor of the season would oblige them to raise the siege, not only from want of conveniences to keep the field, but from the fear that the freezing of the Lake would make their return impracticable in case of accident. I would recommend the removal of carriages and draft-cattle of all kinds from the country adjacent, that, if they should attempt to slip by Ticonderoga, by any other route, and come down upon the settlements, the plan should be rendered abortive for want of the means of conveyance for their baggage and stores. I am unacquainted with the extent of your works, and conse-

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quently ignorant of the number of troops necessary to man them. If your present numbers should be insufficient, I would then by all means advise your making up the deficiency out of the best regulated militia that can be got. Some might likewise be useful in bringing up supplies, and fill the places of men, who would render more service with arms in their hands. You will always be kind enough to bear in mind, that I am giving my opinion, not issuing my orders. The vexation I have experienced from the humors and intolerable caprice of militia, at a critical time, makes me feel sensibly for the officer, who is to depend on them in the day of trial. Upon the whole, I beg you may not be influenced by any thing I have thrown out. You have had experience of the temper of the people, who will probably march to your assistance, and therefore know whether they differ in character from those, who have reinforced the army under my command. In full confidence, that you will do what seems best to your judgment, I submit the matter entirely to you, esteeming myself happy if any hints of mine may be serviceable.

I am, &c. *

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

White Plains, 6 November, 1776.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you, that yesterday morning the enemy made a sudden and unexpected movement from the several posts they had taken in our front.

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* The unsettled state of the army, for several days succeeding the date of this letter, allowed very little leisure to the Commander-in-chief for writing. Two letters from his secretary to the President of Congress, during this period, are contained in the APPENDIX, No. VI.

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They broke up their whole encampments the preceding night, and have advanced towards Kingsbridge and the North River.* The design of this manœuvre is a matter of much conjecture and speculation, and cannot be accounted for with any degree of certainty. The grounds we had taken possession of were strong and advantageous, and such as they could not have gained without much loss of blood in case an attempt had been made. I had taken every possible precaution to prevent their out-flanking us; which may have led to the present measure. They may still have in view their original plan, and, by a sudden wheel, try to accomplish it. Detachments are constantly out to observe their motions, and to harass them as much as possible.

In consequence of this movement I called a council of general officers to-day, to consult on such measures as should be adopted in case they pursued their retreat to New York; the result of which is herewith transmitted.† In respect to myself, I cannot indulge an idea that General Howe, supposing he is going to New York,

* General Greene, who was now stationed at Fort Lee (formerly called Fort Constitution), gave notice on the 31st of October, that the enemy had taken possession of Fort Independence on the north side of Kingsbridge, having made their appearance in that quarter two days before; that he had previously caused every thing valuable to be removed, and the bridges to be cut down. "I should be glad to know your Excellency's mind," he adds, "about holding all the ground from Kingsbridge to the lines. If we attempt to hold the ground, the garrison must be reinforced; but if the garrison is to be drawn into Fort Washington, and we only keep that, the number of troops on the island is too large." In reply the Commander-in-chief wrote, that the question could be answered only by being on the spot, and knowing all the circumstances, and that he should submit the whole to the judgment of General Greene, reminding him of the original design to garrison the works, and preserve the lower lines as long as they could be kept, and thus, by holding a communication across the river, to stop the enemy's ships from passing up and down.

† The council agreed unanimously, that, in case the enemy were retreating towards New York, it would be proper immediately to throw a body of troops into Jersey, that those raised on the east side of Hudson's

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means to close the campaign, and to sit down without attempting something more. I think it highly probable, and almost certain, that he will make a descent with a part of his troops into Jersey; and, as soon as I am satisfied, that the present manœuvre is real and not a feint, I shall use every means in my power to forward a part of our force to counteract his designs; nor shall I be disappointed if he sends a detachment to the southward for the purpose of making a winter campaign. From the information I have received, there is now a number of transports at Red Hook, with about three thousand troops on board. Their destination, as given out, is to Rhode Island; but this seems altogether improbable for various reasons; among others, the season is much against it. In the southern States they will find it milder, and much more favorable for their purposes. I shall take the liberty of mentioning, that it may not be improper to suggest the probability of such a measure to the Assemblies and Conventions in those States, that they may be on their guard, and the propriety of their establishing and laying up magazines of provisions and other necessaries in suitable places. This is a matter of exceeding importance, and what cannot be too much attended to.

From the approaching dissolution of the army, and the departure of the new levies, which is on the eve of taking place, and the little prospect of levying a new one in time, I have written to the eastern States, by the unanimous advice of the general officers, to forward supplies of militia in the room of those that are now here, and who, it is feared, will not be prevailed on to stay any longer than the time they are engaged for.

River should be detached for this purpose, and that three thousand men should be stationed at Peekskill.

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The propriety of this application, I trust, will appear, when it is known that not a single officer is yet commissioned to recruit, and when it is considered how essential it is to keep up some show of force and shadow of an army. I expect the enemy will bend their force against Fort Washington, and invest it immediately. From some advices, it is an object that will attract their earliest attention.

I am happy to inform you, that, in the engagement on Monday se'nnight, I have reason to believe our loss was by no means so considerable as was conjectured at first. By some deserters and prisoners we are told, that of the enemy was tolerably great; some accounts make it about four hundred in killed and wounded; all agree that among the former there was a Colonel Carr of the thirty-fifth regiment. The force that will be sent to Jersey after I am satisfied of Mr. Howe's retreat, in addition to those now there, according to my present opinion, will make it necessary for me to go with them, to put things in a proper channel, and such a way of defence as shall seem most probable to check the progress of the enemy, in case they should attempt a descent there, or move towards Philadelphia.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

* The Court-house and several private houses in the village of White Plains were burnt on the night of the 5th of November. This wanton act was caused by a major in the army, and was severely censured by the Commander-in-chief in the general orders of the next day.—"It is with the utmost astonishment and abhorrence, that the General is informed, that some base and cowardly wretches last night set fire to the Court-house and other buildings, which the enemy had left; the army may rely on it, that they shall be brought to justice and meet with the punishment they deserve." When the army evacuated their first works at White Plains, on the 31st of October, a few barns and other houses within the lines, containing forage and public stores, which could not be removed, were burnt by order of the General. Some historians have erroneously confounded the two incidents, and represented the burning of the houses in the village as an act authorized by the Commander-in-chief.

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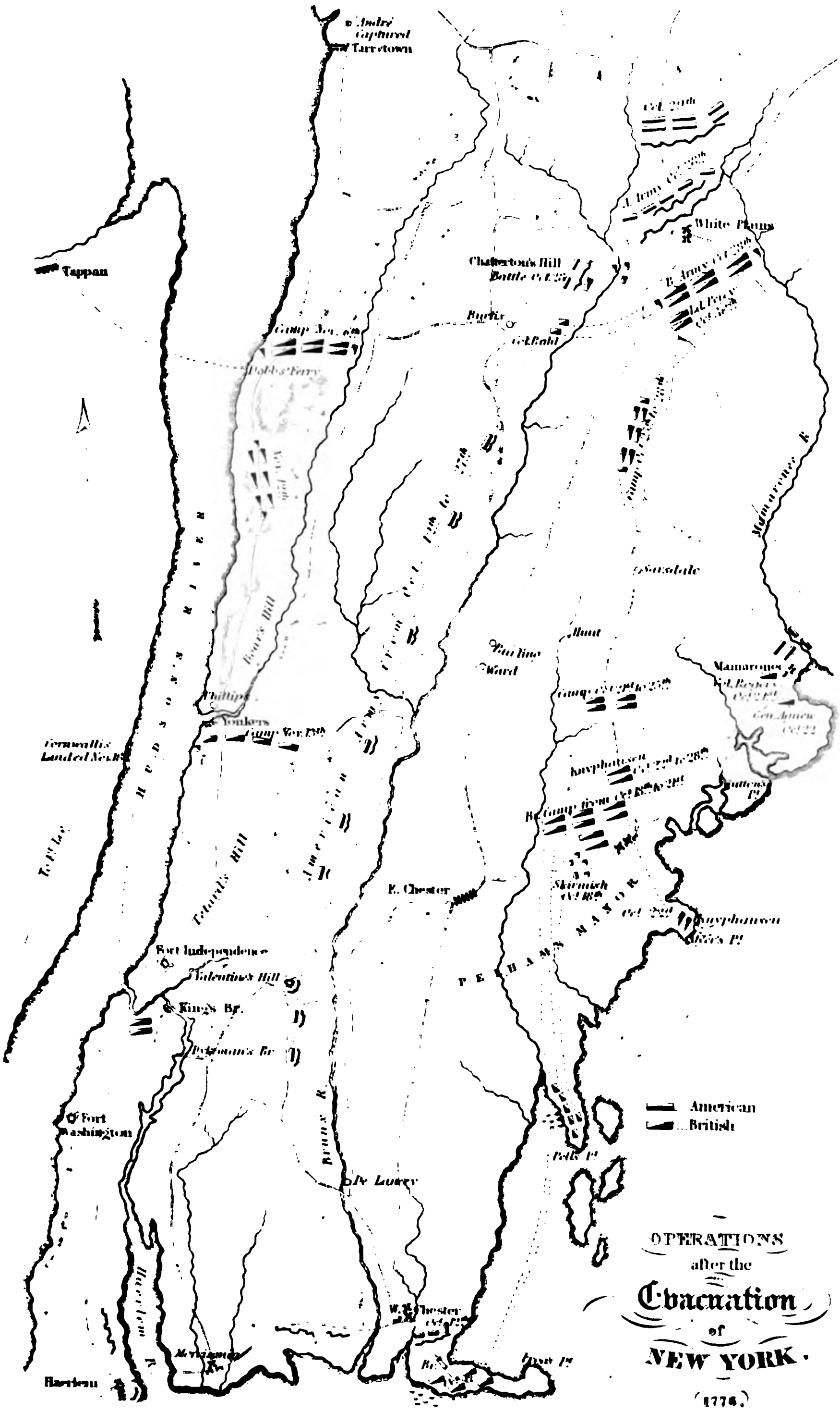

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TO THE ASSEMBLY OF MASSACHUSETTS.

White Plains, 6 November, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

The situation of our affairs is critical and alarming. The dissolution of our army is fast approaching, and but little if any prospect of levying a new one in a reasonable time. Large numbers of it, under the denomination of new levies, are now on the eve of their departure, and this at a time when the enemy have a very numerous and formidable force, watching an opportunity to execute their plans and to spread ruin and devastation among us. Impressed with the importance of these matters, I this day laid them before a council of general officers, with a view of obtaining their opinion upon the same, and upon the measures which, in their judgment, should be immediately adopted. The result was, that I should apply to several of the States for militia, and that your honorable Assembly should be requested to furnish, as soon as possible, four thousand as their quota, to be properly accoutred and equipped with every necessary, to supply the place of those, who are now here under General Lincoln, and who, I fear, will not be prevailed upon to stay longer than the time they at first engaged for. The hope and probability of raising a new army, within a convenient time, are so little, and the consequences so evidently alarming, if a sufficient force is not kept up to counteract the designs of the enemy in the mean time, that the council and myself have unanimously agreed, that the militia should be engaged, if possible, to continue till the 1st of March, unless their services can be sooner dispensed with. We flatter ourselves, by that time, if not long before, such an army will be levied, as to render any future

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claims upon them, unless in cases of the most pressing emergency, altogether unnecessary.

From the experience I have had of your past exertions in times of difficulty, I know, that nothing in your power to effect will be wanting, and, with the greatest confidence I trust, that the present requisition will have your most ready approbation and compliance, being in some degree anticipated by the inquiry you have directed to be made into the state of our affairs, and whether any farther aid will be necessary.

I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON, NEW JERSEY.

White Plains, 7 November, 1776.

SIR,

On Tuesday morning the enemy broke up their encampments, which were in front of our lines, after having remained there several days without attempting any thing. They have gone towards the North River and Kingsbridge. This sudden and unexpected movement is a matter of much speculation. Some suppose they are going into winter-quarters, and will sit down in New York, without doing more than investing Fort Washington. I cannot subscribe wholly

* The temper at this time prevailing among the New York militia may be inferred from a letter written by General Greene, dated at King's Ferry, November 5th. He observes, "I am now in the State of New York, and am informed by Colonel Hawkes Hay, that the militia, whom he commands, refuse to do duty. They say General Howe has promised them *peace, liberty, and safety*, and that is all they want. What is to be done with them? This spirit should be checked in its infancy. I propose to send to the Colonel about fifty men, and I have directed him to acquaint the militia, that, if they refuse to do duty, agreeably to the orders of the State, I will send up a regiment here and march them to Fort Lee to do duty there. I beg your Excellency's further advice."

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to this opinion myself. That they will invest Fort Washington is a matter of which there can be no doubt; and I think there is a strong probability, that General Howe will detach a part of his force to make an incursion into the Jerseys, provided he is going to New York. He must attempt something on account of his reputation; for what has he done as yet with his great army?*

Persuaded that an expedition to the Jerseys will succeed his arrival in New York with a detachment of his army, as soon as I can be satisfied, that the present manœuvre is a real retreat and not a feint, I shall throw over a body of our troops, with the utmost expedition, to assist in checking his progress. At the same time, I beg leave to recommend to your consideration the propriety and necessity, that some measures should be taken to place your militia on the best footing possible, and that a part of them may be in readiness to supply the place of the troops, denominated new levies, from your State, whose term of service will presently expire. Your vigilance and attention, I know, will not be wanting in any instance. Yet, there is one thing more I will take the liberty to mention; that is, that the inhabitants, contiguous to the water, should be prepared to remove their stock, grain, effects, and carriages upon the earliest notice. If they are not so, the calamities, which they will suffer, will be beyond all description, and the advantages derived by the enemy immensely great. They have treated all here without discrimination; the distinction of Whig and Tory has been lost in one general

* On the same day, that is, November 7th, General Washington wrote to General Greene, then at Fort Lee, expressing his conviction, that the enemy would invest Fort Washington, and adding, "I must recommend to you to give every attention in your power, and all the assistance you can, to that garrison."

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scene of ravage and desolation. The article of forage is of great importance to them, and not a blade should remain for their use. What cannot be removed with convenience should be consumed without the least hesitation. These several matters I thought it my duty to suggest to you, not doubting but you will give them such attention as they may deserve; and that your own good judgment will point out many more necessary regulations, adapted to the emergency of our affairs. I do not know the state of the barracks about Elizabethtown, Amboy, and Brunswic. They may be exceedingly necessary to cover our troops. I think, therefore, it would be advisable to have them examined, and that you should direct such necessary repairs to be made as they may require. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Head-Quarters, 8 November, 1776.

SIR,

The late passage of three vessels up the North River, of which we have just received advice, is so plain a proof of the inefficacy of all the obstructions we have thrown into it, that I cannot but think it will fully justify a change in the disposition, which has been made. If we cannot prevent vessels from passing up, and the enemy are possessed of the surrounding country, what valuable purpose can it answer to attempt to hold a post, from which the expected benefit cannot be had? I am therefore inclined to think, that it will not be prudent to hazard the men and stores at Mount Washington; but, as you are on the spot, I leave it to you to give such orders, as to evacuating Mount Washington,

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as you may judge best, and so far revoking the order given to Colonel Magaw to defend it to the last.

The best accounts obtained from the enemy assure us of a considerable movement among their boats last evening; and so far as can be collected from the various sources of intelligence, they must design a penetration into Jersey, and to fall down upon your post. You will therefore immediately have all the stores removed, which you do not deem necessary for your defence; and as the enemy have drawn great relief from the forage and provisions, which they have found in the country, and which our tenderness spared, you will do well to prevent their receiving any fresh supplies there, by destroying them, if the inhabitants will not drive off their stock and remove the hay and grain in time. Experience has shown, that a contrary conduct is not of the least advantage to the poor inhabitants, from whom all their effects of every kind are taken, without distinction and without the least satisfaction.

Troops are filing off from hence as fast as our situation and circumstances will admit, in order to be transported over the river with all expedition. I need not suggest to you the necessity of giving General Mercer early information of all circumstances, that he may move up to your relief with what troops he has. I am, &c.*

* General Greene wrote in reply;—"The passing of the ships up the river is, to be sure, a full proof of the insufficiency of the obstructions to stop the ships from going up; but that garrison employs double the number of men to invest it, that we have to occupy it. They must keep troops at Kingsbridge to prevent a communication with the country, and they dare not leave a very small number for fear our people should attack them. Upon the whole, I cannot help thinking, that the garrison is of advantage; and I cannot conceive it to be in any great danger. The men can be brought off at any time, but the stores may not be so easily removed. Yet I think they can be got off in spite of them, if matters grow desperate. This post is of no importance, except in conjunction with Mount Washington. I was over there last evening. The enemy seem to

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TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, 9 November, 1776.

SIR,

Yesterday evening I received the favor of your letter of the 8th instant. Major Stewart's servant having never represented himself as a person not enlisted in your army, he was considered as a prisoner of war, and sent as such to Jersey. But upon your information, that he was not in the capacity of a soldier, I will give immediate directions for him to be brought back, that he may return to his master. This servant was charged with a letter of a private and delicate nature; but Major Stewart may be assured the contents neither were nor shall be permitted to transpire.

I regret that it has not been in my power to effect the proposed exchange of prisoners before this time. As soon as the proposition was agreed to, I wrote to the Governors and Conventions of the different States, where the prisoners were, to have them collected and sent to the most convenient places in the neighbourhood of the two armies. Their dispersed situation, for their better accommodation, has been the reason of the delay; at least it cannot be ascribed to any other cause. It has not arisen, Sir, from any design on my part; and I am

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be disposing matters to besiege the place; but Colonel Magaw thinks it will take them till December expires before they can carry it. If the enemy do not find it an object of importance, they will not trouble themselves about it; if they do, it is a full proof, that they feel an injury from our possessing it. Our giving it up will open a free communication with the country by the way of Kingsbridge. That must be a great advantage to them and injury to us.

"If the enemy cross the river, I shall follow your Excellency's advice, respecting the cattle and forage. These measures, however cruel in appearance, were ever my maxims of war in the defence of a country; in attacking, they would be very improper."—*MS. Letter, dated Fort Lee, November 9th.*

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persuaded the difficulty of drawing them together must be evident to you, especially as it was early suggested in some of my former letters. As to the charge of some of your officers being confined in common gaols, I had hoped that you were satisfied by my assurances on this head before. It is not my wish, that severity should be exercised towards any, whom the fortune of war has thrown or shall throw into our hands. On the contrary, it is my desire, that the utmost humanity should be shown them. I am convinced, that the latter has been the prevailing line of conduct to prisoners. There have been instances, in which some have met with less indulgence, than could have been wished, owing to a refractory conduct and a disregard of paroles. If there are other instances, in which a strict regard to propriety has not been observed, they have not come to my knowledge, and if you will be pleased to point them out, and to particularize the names of the officers, the earliest inquiry shall be made into the complaint, and the cause removed, if any exists.

With respect to the stragglers, who have lately fallen into our hands, I cannot, upon the best consideration, discern how the agreement subsisting between us is affected by sending them to places from whence they may be easily collected upon a general exchange. That the custom of war requires, or that the interest of an army would admit of a daily exchange of prisoners, are points on which we are so unhappy as to differ in sentiment. The opportunities of conveying intelligence, and many other consequences flowing from such an intercourse, seem so very obvious, that, upon further reflection, I flatter myself you will think with me on this subject. But if otherwise, it might have been exemplified on your part in the immediate return of such stragglers from our army, as have fallen into your hands, which

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would have justified an expectation of a similar conduct from us.

I am, Sir with great respect, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Instructions.

SIR,

The late movement of the enemy, and the probability of their having designs upon the Jerseys, confirmed by sundry accounts from deserters and prisoners, rendering it necessary to throw a body of troops over the North River, I shall immediately follow, and the command of the army, which remains, after General Heath's division marches to Peekskill, will devolve upon you.

A little time now must manifest the enemy's designs, and point out to you the measures proper to be pursued by that part of the army under your command. I shall give no directions, therefore, on this head, having the most entire confidence in your judgment and military exertions. One thing, however, I will suggest, namely, that the appearance of embarking troops for the Jerseys may be intended as a feint to weaken us, and render the strong post we now hold more vulnerable, or the enemy may find that troops are assembled with more expedition and in greater numbers, than they expected, on the Jersey shore to oppose them; and as it is possible, from one or the other of these motives, that they may yet pay the army under your command a visit, it will be unnecessary, I am persuaded, to recommend to you the propriety of putting this post, if you stay at

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* See General Howe's answer in the APPENDIX, No. VII.

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it, into a proper posture of defence, and of guarding against surprises. But I would recommend it to your consideration, whether, should the above conjectures be realized, your retiring to Croton Bridge, and some strong post still more easterly covering the other passes through the Highlands, may not be more advisable, than to run the hazard of an attack with unequal numbers. At any rate, I think all your baggage and stores, except such as are necessary for immediate use, ought to be transported to the northward of Croton River. You will consider the post at Croton Bridge as under your immediate care, as also that lately occupied by General Parsons; and the other two can be of little use, while the enemy hover about the North River, and upon our right flank.

General Wooster, of the State of Connecticut, and, by order of the Governor, commanding several regiments of militia, is now I presume in or about Stamford; he was to receive orders from me, and of course he will do the same from you. There are also some other regiments of Connecticut militia, who came out with General Saltonstall, and were annexed to General Parsons's brigade; and others, whom you must dispose of as occasion and circumstances shall require; but as, by the late returns, many of those regiments are reduced to little more than a large company, I recommend the discharge of all the supernumerary officers, and that the others be annexed to some brigade. As the season will soon oblige the enemy to betake themselves to winter-quarters, and will not permit our troops to remain much longer in tents, it may be well to consider in time where magazines of provisions and forage should be laid in for the army on the east side of Hudson's River. Peekskill, or its neighbourhood, would, I should think, be a very advantageous post for as many as can be sup-

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ported there. Croton Bridge may possibly be another good deposit for the rest, or somewhere more easterly, as the commissary and quartermaster may assist in pointing out.

It may not be amiss to remind you, for it ought to have some influence on your deliberations and measures, that the Massachusetts militia stand released from their contract on the 17th instant, and that the Connecticut militia are not engaged for any fixed period, and, by what I can learn, begin to grow very impatient to return, and indeed few are left. If the enemy should remove the whole or the greater part of their force to the west side of Hudson's River, I have no doubt of your following, with all possible despatch, leaving the militia and invalids to cover the frontiers of Connecticut in case of need. Given at Head-Quarters, near the White Plains, this 10th day of November, 1776.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, 10 November, 1776.

SIR,

I was yesterday evening favored with a call by the gentlemen appointed Commissioners from your State to arrange your officers, and to adopt some line of conduct for recruiting the quota of men, which you are to furnish. In discussing this subject, the gentlemen informed me, that your Assembly, to induce their men to enlist more readily into the service, had passed a vote advancing their pay twenty shillings per month, over and above that allowed by Congress. It is seldom, that I interfere with the determinations of any public body, or venture to hold forth my opinion contrary to the decisions, which they form; but, upon this occasion, I must take

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the liberty to mention, especially as the influence of that vote will be general and Continental, that, according to my ideas and those of every general officer I have consulted, a more mistaken policy could not have been adopted, or one that, in its consequences, will more effectually prevent the great object, which Congress have in view, and which the situation of our affairs so loudly calls for, the levying a new army. That the advance, allowed by your State, may be the means of raising your quota of men sooner than it otherwise would, perhaps may be true; but, when it is considered, that it will be an effectual bar to the other States in raising the quotas exacted from them, when it is certain, that, if their quotas could be made up without this advance coming to their knowledge, the moment they come to act with troops, who receive a higher pay, jealousy, impatience, and mutiny will immediately take place, and occasion desertions, if not a total dissolution of the army,—it must then be viewed as injurious and fatal. That troops will never act together, in the same cause and for different pay, must be obvious to every one. Experience has already proved it in this army. That Congress will take up the subject, and make the advance general, is a matter of which there can be but little probability, as the addition of a suit of clothes, to the former pay of the privates, was a long time debated before it could be obtained.

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Peekskill, 11 November, 1776.

SIR,

Agreeably to the resolves of Congress, I shall use every measure in my power, that the moving and pres-

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ent confused state of the army will admit, to appoint officers for recruiting. You will have been advised, before this, of the arrival of Commissioners from Massachusetts. Others have come from Connecticut; but, from the present appearance of things, we seem but little if any nearer to levying an army. I had anticipated the resolve respecting the militia, by writing to the eastern States and to the Jerseys, by the advice of my general officers, and from a consciousness of the necessity of getting in a number of men if possible, to keep up the appearance of an army. How my applications will succeed, the event must determine. I have little or no reason to expect, that the militia now here will remain a day longer than the time they first engaged for. I have recommended their stay, and requested it in general orders. General Lincoln and the Massachusetts Commissioners are using their interest with those from that State; but, as far as I can judge, we cannot rely on their staying.

I left White Plains about eleven o'clock yesterday; all was peace then. The enemy appeared to be preparing for their expedition to Jersey, according to every information. What their designs are, or whether their present conduct is not a feint, I cannot determine. The Maryland and Virginia troops under Lord Stirling have crossed the river, as have part of those from the Jerseys; the remainder are now embarking. The troops, judged necessary to secure the several posts through the Highlands, have also got up. I am going to examine the passes, and direct such works as may appear necessary; after which, and making the best disposition I can of things in this quarter, I intend to proceed to Jersey, which I expect to do to-morrow.*

* The command of the posts in the Highlands, including the passes on both sides of the river, and the forts Constitution, Montgomery, and Inde-

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The Assemblies of Massachusetts and Connecticut, to induce their men more readily to engage in the service, have voted an advance pay of twenty shillings per month, in addition to that allowed by the Congress to privates. It may perhaps be the means of their levying the quotas exacted from them sooner, than they could otherwise have been raised; but I am of opinion, that a more fatal and mistaken policy could not have entered their councils, or one more detrimental to the general cause. The influence of the vote will become Continental, and materially affect the other States in making up their levies. If they could do it, I am certain, when the troops come to act together, that jealousy, impatience, and mutiny would necessarily arise, A different pay cannot exist in the same army. The reasons are obvious, and experience has proved their force in the case of the eastern and southern troops last spring. Sensible of this, and of the pernicious consequences, that would inevitably result from the advance, I have prevented the Commissioners from proceeding, or publishing their terms, till they could obtain the sense of Congress upon the subject, and remonstrated against it in a letter to Governor Trumbull. I am not singular in opinion; I have the concurrence of all the general officers, as to its fatal tendency. I congratulate you and Congress upon the news from Ticonderoga, and that General Carleton and his army have been obliged to return to Canada without attempting and thing.

I have the honor to be, &c.

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pendence, had been assigned to General Heath, and a division of the army had already marched to Peekskill for that purpose. General Washington reconnoitred these posts on the 11th of November, and passed over into New Jersey the next day. General Heath's division consisted mostly of Connecticut and Massachusetts troops, and General George Clinton's brigade of New York militia.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

General Greene's Quarters, 14 November, 1776.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you of my arrival here yesterday, and that the whole of the troops belonging to the States, which lay south of Hudson's River, and which were in the New York government, have passed over to this side, except the regiment lately Colonel Smallwood's, which I expect is now on their march. That they may be ready to check any incursions, which the enemy may attempt in this neighbourhood, I intend to quarter them at Brunswic, Amboy, Elizabethtown, Newark, and about this place, unless Congress should conceive it necessary for any of them to be stationed at or more contiguous to Philadelphia. In such case they will be pleased to signify their pleasure. There will be very few of them after the departure of those, who were engaged for the Flying Camp, which is fast approaching. The disposition I have mentioned seems to me well calculated for the end proposed, and also for their accommodation.

The movements and designs of the enemy are not yet understood. Various are the opinions and reports on this head. From every information, the whole have removed from Dobbs's Ferry towards Kingsbridge; and it seems to be generally believed on all hands, that the investing of Fort Washington is one object they have in view; but that can employ but a small part of their force. Whether they intend a southern expedition, must be determined by time; to me there appears a probability of it, which seems to be favored by the advices we have that many transports are wooding and watering.* Enclosed you have copies of two letters

* Notwithstanding the vigilance of the Americans at Fort Washington

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from General Howe, and of my answer to the first of them. The letter alluded to, and returned in his last, was one from myself to Mrs. Washington, of the 25th ultimo, from whence I conclude that all the letters, which went by the Boston express, have come into his possession.

Before I conclude, I beg leave, not only to suggest, but to urge the necessity of increasing our field artillery very considerably. Experience has convinced me, as it has every gentleman of discernment in this army, that, while we remain so much inferior to the enemy in this instance, we must carry on the war under infinite disadvantages, and without the smallest probability of success. It has been peculiarly owing to the situation of the country, where their operations have been conducted, and to the rough and strong grounds we possessed ourselves of, and over which they had to pass, that they have not carried their arms, by means of their artillery, to a much greater extent. When these difficulties cease, by changing the scene of action to a level, champaign country, the worst of consequences are to be apprehended. I would, therefore, with the concurrence of all the officers, whom I have spoken to upon the subject, submit to the consideration of Congress, whether immediate measures ought not to be taken for procuring a respectable train. It is agreed on all hands, that each battalion should be furnished at least with two pieces, and that a smaller number than a hundred of three pounds, fifty of six pounds, and fifty of twelve pounds, should not be provided, in addition to those we now have. Besides these, if some eighteen and twenty-four

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and Fort Lee, the British passed up the river undiscovered on the night of the 14th with thirty flat-boats, which were taken into Haerlem River, and used two days afterwards in transporting their troops across to the attack on Fort Washington.

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pounders are ordered, the train will be more serviceable and complete. The whole should be of brass, for the most obvious reasons; they will be much more portable, and not half so liable to burst; and, when they do, no damage is occasioned by it, and they may be cast over again. The sizes before described should be particularly attended to; if they are not, there will be great reason to expect mistakes and confusion in the charges in time of action, as it has frequently happened in the best regulated armies. The disparity between those I have mentioned, and such as are of an intermediate size, is difficult to discern. It is also agreed, that a regiment of artillerists, with approved and experienced officers, should be obtained if possible, and some engineers of known reputation and abilities. I am sorry to say, that too ready an indulgence has been given to several appointments in the latter instance, and that men have been promoted, who seem to me to know but little if any thing of the business.

A proposition having been made long since to General Howe, and agreed to by him, for an exchange of prisoners, in consequence of the resolutions of Congress to that effect, I shall be extremely happy if you will give directions to the committees, and those having the charge of prisoners in the several States south of Jersey, to transmit to me proper lists of the names of all the commissioned officers, and of their rank and the corps they belong to; also the number of non-commissioned and privates, and their respective regiments. You will perceive by his letter, that he supposes me to have effected some delay, or to have been unmindful of the proposition I had made.

I propose to stay in this neighbourhood a few days, in which time I expect the designs of the enemy will be more disclosed, and their incursions be made in this

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quarter, or their investiture of Fort Washington, if they are intended.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

General Greene's Head-Quarters,
16 November, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

You will see by the enclosed resolves, that Congress have entered into some new regulations respecting the enlistment of the new army, and reprobating the measures adopted by the State of Massachusetts Bay for raising their quota of men. As every possible exertion should be used for recruiting the army as speedily as may be, I request that you immediately publish, in orders, that an allowance of a dollar and one-third of a dollar will be paid to the officers for every soldier they shall enlist, whether in or out of camp. Also, that it will be optional in the soldier to enlist during the continuance of the war, or for three years, unless sooner discharged by Congress. In the former case, they are to receive all such bounty and pay as have been heretofore mentioned in orders; those who engage for the latter time, that of three years, are not to receive the bounty in land. That no mistakes may be made, you will direct the recruiting officers, from your division, to provide two distinct enlisting rolls; one for those to sign who engage during the war; the other for those who enlist for three years, if their service shall be so long required.

I am sorry to inform you, that this day about twelve o'clock, the enemy made a general attack upon our lines about Fort Washington, which having carried, the gar-

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rison retired within the fort. Colonel Magaw finding there was no prospect of retreating across the North River, surrendered the post. We do not yet know the loss of killed and wounded on either side; but I imagine it must have been considerable, as the engagement, at some parts of the lines, was of long continuance and heavy; neither do I know the terms of capitulation. The force of the garrison, before the attack, was about two thousand men.

Before I left Peekskill, I urged to General Heath the necessity of securing the pass through the Highlands next to the river, as well on that as this side, and to the forts above; but as the preserving of these and others which lie more easterly, and which are equally essential, is a matter of the last importance, I must beg you to turn your attention that way, and to have such measures adopted for their defence as your judgment shall suggest to be necessary. I do not mean to advise abandoning your present post contrary to your own opinion, but only to mention my ideas of the importance of those passes, and that you cannot give too much attention to their security, by having works erected in the most advantageous places for that purpose.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

General Greene's Quarters, 16 November, 1776.

SIR,

Since I had the honor of addressing you last, an important event has taken place, of which I wish to give you the earliest intelligence. The preservation of the passage of the North River was an object of so much consequence, that I thought no pains or expense too

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great for that purpose; and, therefore, after sending off all the valuable stores, except such as were necessary for its defence, I determined, agreeably to the advice of most of the general officers, to risk something to defend the post on the east side, called Mount Washington. When the army moved up in consequence of General Howe's landing at Frog's Point, Colonel Magaw was left in that command, with about twelve hundred men, and orders given to defend it to the last. Afterwards, reflecting upon the smallness of the garrison, and the difficulty of their holding it, if General Howe should fall down upon it with his whole force, I wrote to General Greene, who had the command on the Jersey shore, directing him to govern himself by circumstances, and to retain or evacuate the post as he should think best, and revoking the absolute order to Colonel Magaw to defend the post to the last extremity. General Greene, struck with the importance of the post, and the discouragement, which our evacuation of posts must necessarily have given, reinforced Colonel Magaw with detachments from several regiments of the Flying Camp, but chiefly of Pennsylvania, so as to make up the number to about two thousand.

In this situation things were yesterday, when General Howe demanded the surrender of the garrison, to which Colonel Magaw returned a spirited refusal.* Immediately upon receiving an account of this transaction, I

* Colonel Magaw returned the following answer to the British adjutant-general, who sent him the summons to surrender the fort.

"15 November, 1776.

"SIR,

"If I rightly understand the purport of your message from General Howe, communicated to Colonel Swoope, this post is to be immediately surrendered or put to the sword. I think it rather a mistake, than a settled purpose of General Howe, to act a part so unworthy of himself and the British nation. But give me leave to assure his Excellency, that, ac-

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came from Hackinsac to this place, and had partly crossed the North River when I met General Putnam and General Greene, who were just returning from thence, and informed me that the troops were in high spirits, and would make a good defence; and, it being late at night, I returned. Early this morning Colonel Magaw posted his troops partly in the lines thrown up by our army on our first coming thither from New York, and partly on a commanding hill lying north of Mount Washington, the lines being all to the southward. In this position the attack began about ten o'clock, which our troops stood, and returned the fire in such a manner as gave me great hopes that the enemy was entirely repulsed. But at this time a body of troops crossed Haerlem River in boats, and landed inside of the second lines, our troops being then engaged in the first. Colonel Cadwalader, who commanded in the lines, sent off a detachment to oppose them; but they, being overpowered by numbers, gave way; upon which, Colonel Cadwalader ordered his troops to retreat in order to gain the fort. It was done with much confusion; and the enemy crossing over came in upon them in such a manner, that a number of them surrendered.

At this time the Hessians advanced on the north side

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tuated by the most glorious cause that mankind ever fought in, I am determined to defend this post to the very last extremity.

"ROBERT MAGAW."

A copy of this reply was immediately sent across the river to General Greene, and enclosed in the following note from him to General Washington, who was then at Hackinsac.

"Fort Lee, 4 o'clock.

"DEAR SIR,

"Enclosed you have a letter from Colonel Magaw. The contents will require your Excellency's attention. I have directed Colonel Magaw to defend the place until he hears from me. I have ordered General Heard's brigade to hasten on. I shall go to the Island soon. I am, &c.

"NATHANAEL GREENE."

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of the fort in very large bodies. They were received by the troops posted there with proper spirit, and kept back a considerable time; but at length they were also obliged to submit to a superiority of numbers, and retire under the cannon of the fort. The enemy, having advanced thus far, halted, and immediately a flag went in, with a repetition of the demand of the fortress, as I suppose.* At this time I sent a billet to Colonel Magaw, directing him to hold out, and I would endeavour this evening to bring off the garrison, if the fortress could not be maintained, as I did not expect it could, the enemy being possessed of the adjacent ground. But, before this reached him, he had entered too far into a treaty to retract; after which, Colonel Cadwalader told another messenger, who went over, that they had been able to obtain no other terms than to surrender as prisoners of war.† In this situation matters now stand. I have stopped General Beall's and General Heard's brigades, to preserve the post and stores here, which, with the other troops, I hope we shall be able to effect. I do not yet know the numbers killed or wounded on either side; but, from the heaviness and continuance of the fire in some places, I imagine there must have been considerable execution. The loss of such a number of officers and men, many of whom have been trained with more than common attention, will, I fear, be severely felt; but, when that of the arms and accoutrements is added, much more so; and must be a further incentive to procure as considerable a supply as possible for the new troops, as soon as it can be done. I am, &c.

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* General Howe in his public despatch stated, that Colonel Rahl had brought his column within one hundred yards of the fort, when he summoned it to surrender, and a treaty was acceded to by Colonel Magaw.

† They were required to surrender as prisoners of war, giving up their arms, ammunition, and stores of every kind; but the men in the garrison

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TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

Hackinsac, 19 November, 1776.

DEAR BROTHER,

At the White Plains, the enemy advanced a second time upon us, as if they meant a general attack; but, finding us ready to receive them, and upon such ground as they could not approach without loss, they filed off and returned towards New York. As it was conceived, that this manœuvre was made with a design to attack Fort Washington, or to throw a body of troops into the Jerseys, or, what might be still worse, aim a stroke at Philadelphia, I hastened over to this side, with about five thousand men, by a circuitous march of about sixty-five miles, which we were obliged to take, on account of the shipping that opposed the passage at all the lower ferries. But I did not arrive in time to take measures to save Fort Washington, though I got here myself a day or two before it surrendered, which happened on the 16th instant, after making a defence of about four or five hours only. We have no particular account of the loss on either side, or of the circumstances attending this matter. The whole garrison, after being driven from the outer lines, and returning within the fort, surrendered themselves prisoners of war, but have given me no account of the terms. By a letter, which I have just received from General Greene at Fort Lee, I am informed, that "one of the train of artillery came across the river last night on a raft. By his account, the enemy have suffered greatly on the north side of Fort Washington. Colonel Rawlings's regiment (late Hugh Stephenson's) was posted there, and behaved with great spirit. Colo-

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were allowed to keep possession of their baggage, and the officers to retain their swords.

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nel Magaw could not get the men to man the lines, otherwise he would not have given up the fort."

This is a most unfortunate affair, and has given me great mortification; as we have lost not only two thousand men that were there, but a good deal of artillery, and some of the best arms we had. And what adds to my mortification is, that this post, after the last ships went past it, was held contrary to my wishes and opinion, as I conceived it to be a hazardous one; but, it having been determined on by a full council of general officers, and a resolution of Congress having been received strongly expressive of their desire, that the channel of the river, which we had been laboring to stop for a long time at that place, might be obstructed, if possible, and knowing that this could not be done, unless there were batteries to protect the obstruction, I did not care to give an absolute order for withdrawing the garrison, till I could get round and see the situation of things, and then it became too late, as the fort was invested. Upon the passing of the last ships, I had given it as my opinion to General Greene, under whose care it was, that it would be best to evacuate the place; but, as the order was discretionary, and his opinion differed from mine, it unhappily was delayed too long, to my great grief; as I think General Howe, considering his army and ours, would have had but a poor tale to tell without it, and would have found it difficult, unless some southern expedition may prove successful, to reconcile the people of England to the conquest of a few pitiful islands, none of which were defensible, considering the great number of their ships, and the power they have by sea to surround and render them unapproachable.

It is a matter of great grief and surprise to me to find the different States so slow and inattentive to that essential business of levying their quotas of men. In ten

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days from this date, there will not be above two thousand men, if that number, of the fixed established regiments on this side of Hudson's River to oppose Howe's whole army, and very little more on the other to secure the eastern colonies and the important passes leading through the Highlands to Albany, and the country about the Lakes. In short, it is impossible for me, in the compass of a letter, to give you any idea of our situation, of my difficulties, and of the constant perplexities and mortifications I meet with, derived from the unhappy policy of short enlistments, and delaying them too long. Last fall, or winter, before the army, which was then to be raised, was set about, I represented in clear and explicit terms the evils, which would arise from short enlistments, the expense which must attend the raising an army every year, the futility of such an army when raised; and, if I had spoken with a prophetic spirit, I could not have foretold the evils with more accuracy than I did. All the year since, I have been pressing Congress to delay no time in engaging men upon such terms as would insure success, telling them that the longer it was delayed the more difficult it would prove. But the measure was not commenced till it was too late to be effected, and then in such a manner, as to bid adieu to every hope of getting an army, from which any services are to be expected; the different States, without regard to the qualifications of an officer, quarrelling about the appointments, and nominating such as are not fit to be shoeblacks, from the local attachments of this or that member of Assembly.

I am wearied almost to death with the retrograde motion of things, and I solemnly protest, that a pecuniary reward of twenty thousand pounds a year would not induce me to undergo what I do; and after all, perhaps, to lose my character, as it is impossible, under such a

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variety of distressing circumstances, to conduct matters agreeably to public expectation, or even to the expectation of those, who employ me, as they will not make proper allowances for the difficulties their own errors have occasioned.

I am glad to find by your last letter, that your family are tolerably well recovered from the indisposition they labored under. God grant you all health and happiness. Nothing in this world would contribute so much to mine, as to be once more fixed among you in the peaceable enjoyment of my own vine and fig-tree. Adieu, my dear Sir; remember me affectionately to my sister and the children, and give my compliments to those, who inquire after your sincerely affectionate brother.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Hackinsac, 21 November, 1776.

DEAR GENERAL,

It must be painful to you, as well as to us, that I have no news to send you, but of a melancholy nature. Yesterday morning the enemy landed a large body of troops below Dobbs's Ferry, and advanced very rapidly to the fort called by your name. I immediately went over, and, as the fort was not tenable on this side, and we were in a narrow neck of land, the passes from which the enemy were attempting to seize, I directed the troops, consisting of Beall's, Heard's, the remainder of Ewing's brigades, and some other parts of broken regiments, to move over to the west side of Hackinsac River. A considerable quantity of stores and some artillery have fallen into the enemy's hands. We have no account of their movements this morning. As this

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country is almost a dead flat, and we have not an intrenching tool, nor above three thousand men, and they much broken and dispirited, not only with our ill success, but the loss of their tents and baggage, I have resolved to avoid any attack, though by so doing I must leave a very fine country open to their ravages, or a plentiful storehouse from which they will draw voluntary supplies.

With respect to your situation, I am very much at a loss what now to determine. There is such a change of circumstances since the date of your letter, as seems to call for a change of measures. Your post undoubtedly will answer some important purposes; but whether so many or so great as your removal, is well worthy of consideration. You observe, that it prevents a fine, fertile country from affording supplies to the enemy; but now they have one much more so, and more contiguous. They have already traversed a part of that country, leaving little behind them. Is it probable they will return? If not, the distance must be too great to render it serviceable in winter. Upon the whole, therefore, I am of opinion, and the gentlemen about me concur in it, that the public interest requires your coming over to this side of the Hudson, with the Continental troops, leaving Fellows's and Wadsworth's brigades to take care of the stores during their short stay, at the expiration of which I suppose they will set out for home.

My reasons for this measure, which I think must have weight with you, are, that the enemy is evidently changing the seat of war to this side of the North River, and that the inhabitants of this country will expect the Continental army to give them what support they can, and, failing in that, they will cease to depend upon or support a force, from which no protection is derived. It is therefore of the utmost importance, that at least an appearance of force should be made, to keep this province

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in the connexion with the others. If that should not be done, it is much to be feared, that the effects on Pennsylvania would be very considerable, and more and more endanger our public interest. Unless some new event should occur, therefore, or some more cogent reason present itself to the contrary, I would have you move over by the easiest and best passage. I am sensible your numbers will not be large, and that perhaps it may not be agreeable to the troops. As to the first, report will exaggerate them and preserve an appearance of an army, which will at least have an effect to encourage the desponding here; and as to the other, you will doubtless represent to them, that in duty and gratitude their service is due, wherever the enemy make the greatest impression, or seem to intend it.

I am, Sir, with great regard, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Hackinsac, 21 November, 1776.

SIR,

The unhappy affair of the 16th has been succeeded by further misfortunes. Yesterday morning a large body of the enemy landed between Dobbs's Ferry and Fort Lee. Their object was, evidently, to enclose the whole of our troops and stores that lay between the North and Hackinsac Rivers, which form a very narrow neck of land. For this purpose, they formed and marched as soon as they had ascended the high grounds towards the fort. Upon the first information of their having landed, and of their movements, our men were ordered to meet them; but, finding their numbers greatly superior, and that they were extending themselves to seize on the passes over the river, it was

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thought prudent to withdraw our men; which was effected, and their retreat secured. We lost the whole of the cannon that were at the fort, except two twelve-pounders, and a great deal of baggage, between two and three hundred tents, about a thousand barrels of flour, and other stores in the quartermaster's department. This loss was inevitable. As many of the stores had been removed as circumstances and time would admit of. The ammunition had been happily got away.

Our present situation between Hackinsac and Passaic Rivers being exactly similar to our late one, and our force here by no means adequate to an opposition, that will promise the smallest probability of success, we are taking measures to retire over the waters of the latter, when the best disposition will be formed that circumstances will allow. By Colonel Cadwalader, who has been permitted by General Howe to return to his friends, I am informed the surrender of the garrison on the 16th was on the common terms as prisoners of war; the loss of the Hessians, about three hundred privates and twenty-seven officers killed and wounded; about forty of the British troops, and two or three officers; the loss on our side but inconsiderable. I beg leave to refer you to him for a more particular account, and also for his relation of the distresses of our prisoners.*

I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Your favor of the 16th was duly received. My letter to the Board of War, on the subject of the return of the Waldeckers, I presume you will have seen.

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* Colonel Cadwalader was immediately released without parole by Sir William Howe, at the instance of General Prescott, who, when a prisoner in Philadelphia, had received civilities from Colonel Cadwalader's father.

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TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON, NEW JERSEY.

Aquackanoc Bridge, 21 November, 1776.

SIR,

I have this moment arrived at this place with General Beall's and General Heard's brigades from Maryland and Jersey, and part of General Ewing's from Pennsylvania. Three other regiments, left to guard the passes upon Hackinsac River, and to serve as covering parties, are expected up this evening. After the unfortunate loss of Fort Washington, it was determined to evacuate Fort Lee in a great measure, as it was in a manner useless in obstructing the passage of the North River, without the assistance of Fort Washington. The ammunition and some other stores were accordingly removed; but, before we could effect our purpose, the enemy landed yesterday morning, in very considerable numbers, about six miles above the fort. Their intent evidently was to form a line across, from the place of their landing to Hackinsac Bridge, and thereby hem in the whole garrison between the North and Hackinsac Rivers. However, we were lucky enough to gain the bridge before them; by which means we saved all our men, but were obliged to leave some hundred barrels of flour, most of our cannon, and a considerable parcel of tents and baggage.

Finding we were in the same danger of being pent up between Hackinsac and Passaic Rivers, that we had been between the North and Hackinsac; and finding the country, from its levelness and openness, unfit for making a stand, it was determined to draw the whole of our force to this side of the river, where we can watch the operations of the enemy, without danger of their surrounding us or making a lodgment in our rear. But, as our numbers are still very inadequate to that of the

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enemy, I imagine I shall be obliged to fall down towards Brunswic, and form a junction with the troops, already in that quarter, under the command of Lord Stirling. As the term of the enlistment of the Flying Camp, belonging to Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland, is near expiring, it will occasion so great a diminution of my army, that I submit it to your judgment, whether it would not be proper for you to call together such a number of militia, as, in conjunction with the troops I shall have left, will serve to cover the country and stop the progress of the enemy, if they should attempt to penetrate. If the weather continues favorable, I am apprehensive that they will attempt to make amends for the slowness of their operations at the beginning of the campaign. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Newark, 23 November, 1776.

SIR,

I have not yet heard, that any provision is making to supply the place of the troops composing the Flying Camp, whose departure is now at hand. The situation of our affairs is truly critical, and such as requires uncommon exertions on our part. From the movements of the enemy, and the information we have received, they certainly will make a push to possess themselves of this part of the Jerseys. In order that you may be fully apprized of our weakness, and of the necessity there is of our obtaining early succours, I have, by the advice of the general officers here, directed General Mifflin to wait on you. He is intimately acquainted with our circumstances, and will represent them better than my

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hurried state will allow.* I have written to General Lee to come over with the Continental regiments immediately under his command; those with General Heath I have ordered to secure the passes through the Highlands. I have also written to Governor Livingston, requesting of him such aid as may be in his power; and I would submit it to the consideration of Congress, whether application should not be made for part of the Pennsylvania militia to step forth at this pressing time.

Before I conclude, I would mention, if an early and immediate supply of money could be sent to Mr. Dalham to pay the Flying Camp troops, it might have a happy effect. They would subsist themselves comfortably on their return, and provide many necessaries of which they are in great want; and, moreover, it might be the means of inducing many, after seeing their friends, to engage again. I expected, on coming here, to have met with many of the militia, but find from inquiry that there are not more than from four to five hundred at the different posts. I have the honor to be, &c.

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* When General Mifflin arrived in Philadelphia, he appeared personally before Congress, at the request of that body, and gave further accounts of the state of the army and the views of the Commander-in-chief. General Mifflin was likewise requested by Congress to remain in Philadelphia, until his attendance in camp should be required by General Washington, and to use his exertions and influence to raise troops in the city and neighbouring counties for immediately reinforcing the army. It was also determined to raise a regiment of artillery in Virginia as follows. "Resolved, that a regiment of artillery, to be armed with muskets and bayonets, instead of fusees, be raised in the State of Virginia, on the Continental establishment; the two companies, already raised there, to be part of the said regiment; which is to be composed of one colonel, one lieutenant-colonel, one major, and ten companies, each to consist of one captain, three lieutenants, one serjeant, four bombardiers, eight gunners, four corporals, and forty-eight matrosses." Charles Harrison was appointed colonel, and Edward Carrington lieutenant-colonel of this regiment. — *Journals of Congress, November 26th, 30th.*

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Newark, 24 November, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you this morning of the probability, that some of your letters to me had fallen with the mail into the enemy's hands. My apprehensions on that head have been since confirmed, by direct intelligence from their camp. I am informed, that a letter from you is confidently said to have come to their hands, and that measures are taking to intercept your march. To prevent them from effecting this object, I have judged it proper to acquaint you of this accident, and of their design; at the same time I must request, that you will take every precaution to come by a safe and secure route. I am told, by those who have an intimate knowledge of the country, that, after you leave Haverstraw, the western road by Kakiat will be proper for you to take; but I will not undertake to prescribe any one in particular, only observing, that you will by all means keep between the enemy and the mountains. I need not urge the necessity of your gaining intelligence of the enemy's situation, in the course of your march. I will be silent on that head, nor need I mention the propriety of your sending frequent expresses, to advise me of your approaches. Hoping and trusting that your arrival will be safe and happy, I am, &c.*

* In compliance with a resolve of Congress, General Washington wrote to General Schuyler on the 26th of November, directing him to send down from the army in the northern department the Pennsylvania and New Jersey troops, with orders to join the main army. After the retreat of Sir Guy Carleton from Crown Point, several regiments had been sent by General Gates from Ticonderoga to Albany, and these continued their march to the Jerseys. Seven regiments were thus despatched, four of which joined General Lee in their progress, and the other three marched by a more interior route, till they reached the main army on the Delaware.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Newark, 27 November, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I last night received the favor of your letter of the 25th. My former letters were so full and explicit, as to the necessity of your marching as early as possible, that it is unnecessary to add more on that head. I confess I expected you would have been sooner in motion. The force here, when joined by yours, will not be adequate to any great opposition. At present it is weak; and it has been owing more to the badness of the weather, that the enemy's progress has been checked, than to any resistance we could make. They are now pushing this way; part of them have passed the Passaic. Their plan is not entirely unfolded, but I shall not be surprised, if Philadelphia should turn out to be the object of their movement. The distress of the troops for want of clothes I feel much; but what can I do? Having formed an enterprise against Rogers, I wish you may have succeeded.

I am, dear Sir, with great esteem, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Brunswic, 30 November, 1776.

SIR.

I have been honored with your favor of the 26th, and with its enclosures, by which I perceive the measures that have been adopted for forwarding a reinforcement of militia. Their arrival is much to be wished, the situation of our affairs being truly alarming, and such as demands the earliest aids. As General Mifflin's presence may have a happy influence on the disposition and tem-

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per of many of the Associators, I shall not direct his return so long as he can be done without, and till it becomes indispensably necessary. On Thursday morning I left Newark, and arrived here yesterday with the troops that were there. It was the opinion of all the generals, who were with me, that a retreat to this place was requisite, and founded in necessity, as our force was by no means sufficient to make a stand, with the least probability of success, against an enemy much superior in numbers, and whose advanced guards were entering the town by the time our rear got out. It was the wish of all to have remained there longer, and to have halted before we came thus far; but, upon due consideration of our strength, the circumstances attending the enlistment of a great part of our little force, and the frequent advices, that the enemy were embarking or about to embark another detachment for Staten Island, with a view of landing at Amboy to coöperate with this, which seemed to be confirmed by the information of some persons, who came from the island, that they were collecting and impressing all the wagons they could find, it was judged necessary to proceed till we came here, not only to prevent their bringing a force to act upon our front and rear, but also that we might be more convenient to oppose any troops they might land at South Amboy, which many conjectured to be an object they had in view. This conjecture, too, had probability and some advices to support it.

I hoped we should meet with large and early succours by this time; but as yet no great number of the militia of this State has come in; nor have I much reason to expect, that any considerable aid will be derived from the counties, which lie beyond this river, and in which the enemy are. Their situation will prevent it in a great measure from those parts where they are, provided the

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inclinations of the people were good. Added to this, I have no assurances, that more than a very few of the troops composing the Flying Camp will remain after the time of their engagement is out; so far from it, I am told, that some of General Ewing's brigade, who stand engaged to the 1st of January, are now going away. If those go whose service expires this day, our force will be reduced to a mere handful. From intelligence received this morning, one division of the enemy was advanced last night as far as Elizabethtown, and some of their quartermasters had proceeded about four or five miles on this side, to provide barns for their accommodation. Other accounts say another division, composed of Hessians, are on the road through Springfield, and are reported to have reached that place last night. I do not know how far their views extend; but I doubt not, that they mean to push every advantage resulting from the small number and state of our troops. I early began to forward part of the stores from this place towards Philadelphia. Many are gone; the rest we are moving, and hope to secure. I am, &c.*

* By a despatch from General Howe, dated November 30th, it would appear, that it was not his expectation to cross the Delaware during the present campaign. He considered it essential to gain a footing in New Jersey, where he might quarter a large body of troops for the winter, with the advantage of obtaining shelter, forage, and fresh provisions. In the same despatch he proposed a plan for the next campaign, in which he contemplated extensive operations, an incursion into Rhode Island and Massachusetts and if possible the possession of Boston, an ascent up the North River to Albany, and an attack on Philadelphia and Virginia in the autumn. To effect this scheme he required thirty-five thousand men. The rapid retreat of the American army across New Jersey gave him fresh hopes of further successes, but these were defeated by the battle of Trenton. Meantime he suggested another plan to the minister, for the next campaign, which had for its chief object the reduction of Pennsylvania. The want of sufficient reinforcements from Great Britain prevented either of them from being put into execution according to the original design. See Sir William Howe's *Narrative*, p. 9. Almon's *Parliamentary Register*, Vol. XI. pp. 361, 371.

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TO THE BOARD OF WAR.

Head-Quarters, Brunswic, 30 November, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

In answer to that part of yours, in which you ask my advice as to the propriety of enlisting prisoners of war, I would just observe, that, in my opinion, it is neither consistent with the rules of war, nor politic; nor can I think, that, because our enemies have committed an unjustifiable action, by enticing, and in some instances intimidating, our men into their service, we ought to follow their example. Before I had the honor of yours on this subject, I had determined to remonstrate to General Howe on this head. As to those few, who have already enlisted, I would not have them again withdrawn and sent in, because they might be subjected to punishment; but I would have the practice discontinued in future. If you will revert to the capitulation of St. John's and Chamblee, you will find an express stipulation against the enlisting of the prisoners taken there. I remarked that the enlistment of prisoners was not a politic step. My reason is this, that in time of danger I have always observed such persons most backward, for fear, I suppose, of falling into the hands of their former masters, from whom they expect no mercy; and this fear they are apt to communicate to their fellow-soldiers. They are also most ready to desert when any action is expected, hoping, by carrying intelligence, to secure their peace.* I met Captain Hesketh on the road; and, as the situation of his family did not admit of delay, I permitted him to go immediately to New York, not having the least doubt but General Howe will make a return of any officer of equal rank, who shall be required. I am, &c.

* Major Lutterloh, a foreign officer, proposed to enlist deserters and prisoners, assigning as precedents the example of the King of Prussia, and the practice of the last war.

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TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Brunswic, 1 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you yesterday; but, as from every information of the motions of the enemy, their intent seems plainly directed through this State, and then to Philadelphia, I cannot help calling on you, in the most urgent manner, and begging you to fall upon proper means to draw forth the strength of your province to my support. The enemy's advanced parties were last night at Bonhamtown, four miles on this side of Woodbridge. They are impressing wagons and horses, and collecting cattle and sheep; which is a further proof of their intent to march a considerable distance. Unless my force, therefore, is considerably augmented, it will be impossible for me to make any stand at this place, when the enemy advance, as I have not, including General Williamson's militia, more than four thousand men. The militia from the counties of Morris and Sussex turn out slowly and reluctantly, whether from the want of officers of spirit to encourage them, or your summons not being regularly sent to them, I cannot say; but I have reason to believe, that there has been a deficiency in both cases. Designing men have been purposely sent among them, to influence some and intimidate others; and, unless gentlemen of spirit and character will appear among them, and rouse them, little can be expected. I wrote to General Williamson last night, and pressed him to exert himself; but, I have reason to believe, he has not the confidence of the people so much as could be wished. My accounts of the reinforcements, to be expected from Pennsylvania, are very encouraging; but, from the distance and necessary delays attending a sudden march, I cannot look for them under a week or ten

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days; in which time the enemy will have reached the Delaware; at least if they are not opposed by more than my present numbers. General Lee is on his march down to join me; but, if the enemy should throw in a body of men between us, he will be obliged to make a considerable circuit to avoid them. The boats and craft, all along the Delaware side, should be secured; particularly the Durham boats used for the transportation of produce down the river. Parties should be sent to all the landings, to have them removed to the other side, hauled up, and put under proper guards. One such boat would transport a regiment of men.

I am, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Brunswic, 1 December, 1776.

SIR,

I am to acknowledge the honor of your favor of the 11th ultimo,* and to thank you for your polite return of my letter to Mrs. Washington.† Agreeing to the proposition you were pleased to make for the exchange of such prisoners, as can be conveniently collected, the gentlemen whose names are specified in the enclosed list have permission to proceed immediately to New York. Others, as soon as they arrive, will be allowed

* See APPENDIX, No. VII.

† This was an intercepted letter, which had fallen into the hands of General Howe, and which he had returned without examining its contents. This letter with several others had been taken at Bristol a few days before. The express, who was on his way from the army to Philadelphia, stopped at a tavern in Bristol, where he opened his packet in the bar-room to take out a letter, which was to be sent over the ferry at that place. While he stepped out for a moment, the packet, containing all his letters, was carried off by some unknown person, who was never discovered. The letters soon found their way to the British Commander-in-chief.

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the same indulgence. At a proper season I shall require a return of the like number, and of equal rank.

Having directions from Congress to propose an exchange of Governor Franklin for Brigadier-General Thompson, I would take the liberty to submit the matter to your determination, and to request your answer upon the subject. Besides the persons included in the enclosed list, Captain Hesketh of the seventh regiment, his lady, three children, and two servant maids, were permitted to go in a few days ago.

I am, Sir, with due respect, your most obedient servant.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Brunswic, 1 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

The enemy are advancing, and have got as far as Woodbridge and Amboy, and, from information not to be doubted, they mean to push for Philadelphia. The force I have with me is infinitely inferior in numbers, and such as cannot give or promise the least successful opposition. It is greatly reduced by the departure of the Maryland Flying Camp, and by sundry other causes. I must entreat you to hasten your march as much as possible, or your arrival may be too late to answer any valuable purpose. I cannot particularize either your route, or the place at which you will join me. In these respects you must be governed by circumstances, and the intelligence you receive. I hope to meet a considerable reinforcement of Pennsylvania Associators. It is said they seem spirited upon this occasion.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Trenton, 3 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I was just now favored with your letter of the 30th ultimo. Having written to you fully both yesterday and to-day concerning my situation, it is unnecessary for me to add much at this time. You will readily agree, that I have sufficient cause for my anxiety, and for wishing your arrival as early as possible. In respect to instructions on your route, you must be governed by circumstances. This has been the language of all my letters, since I had occasion to call for your aid. The sooner you can join me with your division, the sooner the service will be benefited. As to bringing any of the troops under General Heath, I cannot consent to it. The posts they are at, and the passes through the Highlands, being of the utmost importance, they must be guarded by good men. I would have you give me frequent advices of your approach. Upon proper information in this instance much may depend. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Trenton, 3 December, 1776.

SIR,

I arrived here myself yesterday morning, with the main body of the army, having left Lord Stirling with two brigades at Princeton and that neighbourhood, to watch the motions of the enemy and give notice of their approach. I am informed, that they had not entered Brunswic yesterday morning at nine o'clock, but were on the opposite side of the Rariton. Immediately on my arrival here, I ordered the removal of all the military

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and other stores and baggage over the Delaware; a great quantity is already got over; and as soon as the boats come up from Philadelphia, we shall load them; by which means I hope to have every thing secured this night and to-morrow, if we are not disturbed. After being disencumbered of my baggage and stores, my future situation will depend entirely upon circumstances.

I have not heard a word from General Lee since the 26th of last month; which surprises me not a little, as I have despatched daily expresses to him, desiring to know when I might look for him. This makes me fearful, that my letters have not reached him. I am informed by report, that General St. Clair has joined him, with three or four regiments from the northward. To know the truth of this, and also when I may expect him, and with what numbers, I have this minute despatched Colonel Stewart, General Gates's aid-de-camp, to meet General Lee and bring me an account.* I look out earnestly for the reinforcement from Philadelphia. I am in hopes, that, if we can draw a good head of men together, it will give spirits to the militia of this State, who have as yet afforded me little or no assistance; nor can I find that they are likely to do much. General Heard has just informed me, that a person, on whose veracity he can depend, has reported to him that on Sunday last he counted a hundred and seventeen sail of ships going out of the Hook. You may depend upon being advised instantly of any further movement in the enemy's army or mine. I have the honor to be, &c.

* Congress seemed to be as much in the dark about General Lee's plans and movements as General Washington, and on the 2d of December they instructed a committee "to send an express to General Lee to know where and in what situation he and the army with him are." — *Secret Journal*, Vol. I. p. 50.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Trenton, 5 December, 1776.

SIR,

As nothing but necessity obliged me to retire before the enemy, and leave so much of the Jerseys unprotected, I conceive it my duty, and it corresponds with my inclination, to make head against them so soon as there shall be the least probability of doing it with propriety. That the country might in some measure be covered, I left two brigades consisting of the five Virginia regiments and that of Delaware, containing in the whole about twelve hundred men fit for duty, under the command of Lord Stirling and General Stephen,* at Princeton, till the baggage and stores could cross the Delaware, or the troops under their respective commands should be forced from thence. I shall now, having removed the greatest part of the above articles, face about with such troops as are here fit for service, and march back to Princeton, and there govern myself by circumstances and the movements of General Lee. At any event, the enemy's progress may be retarded by this means, if they intend to come on, and the people's fears in some measure quieted, if they do not. Sorry I am to observe, however, that the frequent calls upon the militia of this State, the want of exertion in the principal gentlemen of the country, or a fatal supineness and insensibility of danger, till it is too late to prevent an evil that was not only foreseen but foretold, have been the causes of our late disgraces.

* General Adam Stephen, who had lately joined the army with a detachment of Virginia troops, was the same officer, that had been a colonel under Washington and second in command of the Virginia forces during the last French war. Congress had appointed him a brigadier-general in the Continental service on the 4th of September.

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If the militia of this State had stepped forth in season (and timely notice they had), we might have prevented the enemy's crossing the Hackinsac, although without some previous notice of the time and place it was impossible to have done this at the North River. We might with equal probability of success have made a stand at Brunswic on the Rariton. But as both these rivers were fordable in a variety of places, being knee-deep only, it required many men to defend the passes; and these we had not. At Hackinsac our force was insufficient, because a part was at Elizabethtown, Amboy, and Brunswic, guarding a coast, which I thought most exposed to danger; and at Brunswic, because I was disappointed in my expectation of militia, and because on the day of the enemy's approach (and probably the occasion of it) the term of the Jersey and Maryland brigades' service expired; neither of which would consent to stay an hour longer.

These, among ten thousand other instances, might be adduced to show the disadvantages of short enlistments, and the little dependence upon militia in times of real danger. But, as yesterday cannot be recalled, I will not dwell upon a subject, which, no doubt, has given much uneasiness to Congress, as well as extreme pain and anxiety to myself. My first wish is, that Congress may be convinced of the impropriety of relying upon the militia, and of the necessity of raising a larger standing army, than what they have voted. The saving in the article of stores, provisions, and in a thousand other things, by having nothing to do with militia unless in cases of extraordinary exigency, and such as could not be expected in the common course of events, would amply support a large army, which, well officered, would be daily improving, instead of continuing a destructive, expensive, and disorderly mob. I am clear in

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the opinion, that, if forty thousand men had been kept in constant pay since the first commencement of hostilities, and the militia had been excused from doing duty during that period, the Continent would have saved money. When I reflect on the losses we have sustained for want of good troops, the certainty of this is placed beyond a doubt in my mind. In such a case, the militia, who have been harassed and tired by repeated calls upon them, and farming and manufactures in a manner suspended, would, upon any pressing emergency, have run with alacrity to arms; whereas, the cry now is, "they may be as well ruined in one way as another;" and with difficulty they are obtained. I mention these things to show, that in my opinion, if any dependence is placed in the militia another year, Congress will be deceived. When danger is a little removed from them, they will not turn out at all. When it comes home to them, the well-affected, instead of flying to arms to defend themselves, are busily employed in removing their families and effects, whilst the disaffected are concerting measures to make their submission, and spread terror and dismay all around, to induce others to follow their example. Daily experience and abundant proofs warrant this information.

I shall this day reinforce Lord Stirling with about twelve hundred men, which will make his number about two thousand four hundred. To-morrow I mean to repair to Princeton myself, and shall order the Pennsylvania troops, who are not yet arrived, except part of the German battalion and a company of light infantry, to the same place.

By my last advices, the enemy are still at Brunswic; and the account adds, that General Howe was expected at Elizabethtown with a reinforcement, to erect the King's standard, and demand a submission of this State.

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I can only give this as a report, brought from the enemy's camp by some of the country people.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Trenton, 6 December, 1776.

SIR,

I have not received any intelligence of the enemy's movements since my letter of yesterday. From every information, they still remain at Brunswic, except some of their parties, which are advanced a small distance on this side. To-day I shall set out for Princeton myself, unless something should occur to prevent me, which I do not expect. By a letter of the 14th ultimo from a Mr. Caldwell, a clergyman, and a staunch friend to the cause, who has fled from Elizabethtown, and taken refuge in the mountains about ten miles from hence, I am informed, that General or Lord Howe was expected in that town to publish pardon and peace. His words are, "I have not seen his proclamation, but can only say he gives sixty days of grace, and pardons from the Congress down to the committee. No one man in the continent is to be denied his mercy." In the language of this good man, "The Lord deliver us from his mercy!"*

* A proclamation was issued, on the 30th of November, jointly by Lord Howe and General Howe, offering a pardon to all such as had opposed the King's authority and who should within sixty days subscribe a declaration, that they would remain in peaceable obedience to his Majesty, neither taking up arms nor encouraging others to take up arms against him. In the present discouraging state of the affairs of Congress and of Washington's army, many persons in New Jersey and Pennsylvania sought to secure their safety behind the protecting shield of this proclamation, and went over to the British; among others was Galloway, a member of the first Continental Congress, and afterwards the author of abusive attacks on Sir William Howe, and strictures on his military operations in

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Your letter of the 3d, by Major Livingston, was duly received. Before it came to hand, I had written to General Howe about Governor Franklin's exchange, but am not certain whether the letter could not be recovered. I despatched a messenger instantly for that purpose. I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Mr. Berkeley's Summer-Seat, 8 December, 1776.

SIR,

Colonel Reed would inform you of the intelligence, which I first met with on the road from Trenton to Princeton yesterday. Before I got to the latter, I received a second express informing me, that, as the enemy were advancing by different routes, and attempting by one to get in the rear of our troops, which were there, and whose numbers were small, and the place by no means defensible, they had judged it prudent to retreat to Trenton. The retreat was accordingly made, and since to this side of the river. This information I thought it my duty to communicate as soon as possible, as there is not a moment's time to be lost in assembling such force as can be collected; and as the object of the enemy cannot now be doubted in the smallest degree. Indeed, I shall be out in my conjecture, for it is only conjecture, if the late embarkation at New York is not for Delaware River, to coöperate with the army under the immediate command of General Howe, who, I am

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America. See Sir William Howe's *Narrative, and Observations upon a Pamphlet, &c.* p. 37.

* Congress had directed General Washington to propose an exchange of Governor Franklin for General Thompson, but on a second consideration they rescinded their vote, and countermanded the order.

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informed from good authority, is with the British troops and his whole force upon this route.

I have no certain intelligence of General Lee, although I have sent frequent expresses to him, and lately Colonel Humpton, to bring me some accurate accounts of his situation. I last night despatched another gentleman to him, Major Hoops, desiring he would hasten his march to the Delaware, in which I would provide boats, near a place called Alexandria, for the transportation of his troops. I cannot account for the slowness of his march. In the disordered and moving state of the army, I cannot get returns; but, from the best accounts, we had between three thousand and three thousand five hundred men, before the Philadelphia militia and German battalion arrived; they amount to about two thousand.

December 9th. — From several accounts I am led to think, that the enemy are bringing boats with them. If so, it will be impossible for our small force to give them any considerable opposition in the passage of the river; indeed they may make a feint at one place, and, by a sudden removal, carry their boats higher or lower before we can bring our cannon to play upon them. Under these circumstances, the security of Philadelphia should be our next object. From my own remembrance, but more from information, for I never viewed the ground, I should think that a communication of lines and redoubts might soon be formed from the Delaware to the Schuylkill on the north entrance of the city, the lines to begin on the Schuylkill side, about the heights of Springatebury, and run eastward to Delaware, upon the most advantageous and commanding grounds. If something of this kind is not done, the enemy might, in case any misfortune should befall us, march directly in, and take possession. We have ever found that lines, however slight,

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are very formidable to them; they would at least give a check till the people could recover from the fright and consternation, that naturally attend the first appearance of an enemy.

In the mean time, every step should be taken to collect a force, not only from Pennsylvania, but from the neighbouring States. If we can keep the enemy from entering Philadelphia, and keep the communication by water open for supplies, we may yet make a stand, if the country will come to our assistance till our new levies can be collected. If the measure of fortifying the city should be adopted, some skilful person should immediately view the grounds, and begin to trace out the lines and works. I am informed there is a French engineer of eminence in Philadelphia at this time; if so, he will be the most proper.

I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. General Mifflin is this moment come up, and tells me, that all the military stores yet remain in Philadelphia. This makes the immediate fortifying of the city so necessary, that I have desired General Mifflin to return and take charge of the stores; and have ordered Major-General Putnam immediately down to superintend the works and give the necessary directions.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Trenton Falls, 10 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I last night received your favor by Colonel Humpton, and were it not for the weak and feeble state of the force I have, I should highly approve of your hanging on the rear of the enemy, and establishing the post you

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mention; but when my situation is directly the opposite of what you suppose it to be, and when General Howe is pressing forward with the whole of his army (except the troops that were lately embarked, and a few besides left at New York,) to possess himself of Philadelphia, I cannot but request and entreat you, and this too by the advice of all the general officers with me, to march and join me with your whole force with all possible expedition. The utmost exertions, that can be made, will not be more than sufficient to save Philadelphia. Without the aid of your force I think there is but little if any prospect of doing it. I refer you to the route, of which Major Hoops would inform you.

The enemy are now extended along the Delaware at several places. By a prisoner, who was taken last night, I am told, that at Pennington there are two battalions of infantry, three of grenadiers, the Hessian grenadiers, the forty-second of Highlanders, and two others. Their object doubtless is to pass the river above us, or to prevent your joining me. I mention this, that you may avail yourself of the information. Do come on; your arrival may be fortunate, and, if it can be effected without delay, it may be the means of preserving a city, whose loss must prove of the most fatal consequence to the cause of America. Pray exert your influence, and bring with you all the Jersey militia you possibly can. Let them not suppose their State is lost, or in any danger, because the enemy are pushing through it. If you think General St. Clair, or General Maxwell, would be of service to command them, I would send either. I am, &c.*

* General Washington wrote again the next day to General Lee pressing him to hasten forward. "Nothing less," he observes, "than our utmost exertions will be sufficient to prevent General Howe from possessing Philadelphia. The force I have is weak and entirely incompetent to that end. I must therefore entreat you to push on with every possible succour you can bring."

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Trenton Falls, 12 December, 1776.

SIR,

I last night received the favor of Mr. Thomson's letter, enclosing the proceedings of Congress, of the 11th instant. As the publication of their resolve, in my opinion, will not lead to any good end, but, on the contrary, may be attended with some bad consequences, I shall take the liberty to decline inserting it in this day's orders. I am persuaded, if the subject is taken up and reconsidered, that Congress will concur with me in sentiment. I doubt not, but there are some, who have propagated the report; but what if they have? Their remaining in or leaving Philadelphia must be governed by circumstances and events. If their departure should become necessary, it will be right; on the other hand, if there should not be a necessity for it, they will remain, and their continuance will show the report to be the production of calumny and falsehood. In a word, Sir, I conceive it a matter, that may be as well disregarded; and that the removal or staying of Congress, depending entirely upon events, should not have been the subject of a resolve.*

* The proceedings of Congress here alluded to, which had been communicated in a letter from Mr. Secretary Thomson, were as follows.

"Whereas a false and malicious report has been spread by the enemies of America, that the Congress was about to disperse; Resolved, that General Washington be desired to contradict the said scandalous report, this Congress having a better opinion of the spirit and vigor of the army, and of the good people of these States, than to suppose it can be necessary to disperse; nor will they adjourn from the city of Philadelphia in the present state of affairs, unless the last necessity shall direct it."

It was a fortunate circumstance, that General Washington did not publish this resolve to the army, for, the next day after it was passed, Congress actually adjourned from Philadelphia, to assemble again in Baltimore on the 20th of the same month. This step was taken in consequence of

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The intelligence we obtain respecting the movements and situation of the enemy is far from being so certain and satisfactory, as I could wish, though all the probable means in my power, and that I can devise, are adopted for that purpose. Upon the whole there can be no doubt, that Philadelphia is their object, and that they will pass the Delaware as soon as possible. Happy should I be, if I could see the means of preventing them; at present I confess I do not. All military men agree, that it is a work of great difficulty, nay impracticable, where there is any extent of coast to guard. This is the case with us; and we have to do it with a force, small and inconsiderable, and much inferior to that of the enemy. Perhaps Congress have some hope and prospect of reinforcements. I have no intelligence of the sort, and wish to be informed on the subject. Our little handful is daily decreasing by sickness and other causes; and, without aid, without considerable succours and exertions on the part of the people, what can we reasonably look for, or expect, but an event that will be severely felt by the common cause, and that will wound the heart of every virtuous American, the loss of Philadelphia? The subject is disagreeable; but yet it is true. I will leave it, wishing that our situation may become such as to do away the apprehensions, which at this time seem to fill the minds of too many, and with too much justice. By a letter from General Heath, dated at Peekskill, I am advised that Lieutenant-Colonel Vose was then there with Greaton's, Bond's, and Porter's regiments, amounting in the whole to between five and six hundred men, who were coming this way. He

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the strong arguments of General Putnam and General Mifflin, who were called to a conference with Congress on the subject. General Putnam had been sent to take the military command at Philadelphia, and was now preparing to throw up lines of defence on the grounds north of the city.

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adds, that Generals Gates and Arnold would be at Goshen that night, with Stark's, Poor's, and Read's regiments; but for what purpose, he does not mention.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, Trenton Falls, 12 December, 1776.

SIR,

I was a few days ago favored with yours of the 30th of last month; and this is the first opportunity, that has afforded me the pleasure of answering it. The event has shown, that my opinion of General Howe's intentions to make an excursion into Jersey was not ill founded. Immediately after the reduction of Fort Washington, he threw a body of men, consisting of about six thousand, over the North River, with an intention to surprise the garrison of Fort Lee; but they withdrew before he could complete his purpose. Finding the few troops I had with me insufficient to oppose the enemy, and knowing that my numbers would still be diminished by the expiration of the service of the Flying Camp from Jersey, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, which would take place on the last day of November, it was determined to retreat as far as Brunswic, where I hoped to receive a reinforcement from the militia of the State of New Jersey, sufficient to check the further progress of the enemy. But in this I was cruelly disappointed. The inhabitants of this State, either from fear or disaffection, almost to a man, refused to turn out; and I could not bring together above one thousand men; and even on these very little dependence was to be put. My numbers were now reduced to three thousand men, and that of the enemy considerably increased

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by fresh reinforcements. I had sent General Mifflin down to Philadelphia, to raise what force he could in that province, and to send them on with all speed to my assistance. I fell down myself to Trenton, in order to wait for supplies, hoping that such numbers would come on from Pennsylvania as would enable me to turn upon the enemy, and recover most of the ground, which they had gained. General Mifflin was very successful with the militia of Philadelphia, who turned out in a very spirited manner, and he immediately marched about fifteen hundred men up to Trenton; but the remainder of the province continues in a state of supineness; nor do I see any likelihood of their stirring to save their own capital, which is undoubtedly General Howe's great object.

The Delaware now parts the two armies; and nothing hinders the passage of the enemy, but the want of boats, which we have been lucky enough to secure. General Lee is still in the rear of the enemy, with about four thousand men, with whom he is on his march to join me. If he can effect this junction, our army will again make a respectable appearance, and such as, I hope, will disappoint the enemy in their plan upon Philadelphia. I sent down General Putnam, a few days ago, to begin upon some works for the defence of that city, upon the salvation of which our cause almost depends. I am informed, that the enlistment of the new army goes on very successfully to the eastward and southward. Little or nothing can be expected from New York or Jersey, which are, for the most part, in the hands of the enemy. Every thing must depend upon the regular force we can bring into the field in the spring; for I find, from fatal experience, that militia serve only to delude us.

As my distance from the eastern governments makes

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me ignorant of their present circumstances, I will not undertake to direct the disposition of the four regiments, which you have ordered to be raised till the 15th of March. I would only recommend, if they can be spared, that they should march and take post at the Highlands and at the forts upon the North River, as much depends still upon keeping possession of the upper part of that river. I highly approve of your plan for supplying your new army with necessaries. Our old one has suffered considerably for the want of some such wholesome regulations; and you may depend upon my giving countenance to such a commendable scheme.

I am, with great truth and sincerity, Sir, yours, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Bucks County, 12 December, 1776.

Sir,

The enclosed lists, which I have taken the liberty of transmitting, comprehend the officers belonging to your army, who were returned by Colonel Moylan, in pursuance of my direction. I have affixed a mark to the names of such belonging to us, as I wish to have released, and who are of the same rank, except in the instance of Colonel Allen. His exchange, on account of his long imprisonment, I have been particularly instructed to propose. The officers, whose enlargement I now require, are chiefly on parole, and of those who were sent from Canada by General Carleton. In respect to the privates, you will be pleased to direct an equal number to be returned, out of those who were made prisoners on Long Island on the 27th of August, including six volunteers described in one of the lists. I thank you for the ready attention, that was given to the

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return of Major Bird and others who came out with him, in exchange for the officers, who went from Brunswic; but I must request, that, upon any future occasion, the particular officers to be returned shall be of my appointment, or some person authorized for the purpose.

I cannot conclude this letter, without mentioning the severe treatment of Monsieur Wiebert. This gentleman was made prisoner on the 16th ultimo with the garrison on York Island. He holds the rank of a lieutenant-colonel in our service. I am credibly informed he has been committed to the provost-guard, and is there suffering all the inconveniences of a gaol. I am persuaded this treatment is without your knowledge, and that the cause of the complaint will be removed, as soon as it is discovered. I am, Sir, with due respect, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Head-Quarters, at Keith's, 14 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

Before this comes to hand, you will have heard of the melancholy situation of our affairs. I do not mean now to detail our misfortunes. With a handful of men, compared to the enemy's force, we have been pushed through the Jerseys, without being able to make the smallest opposition, and compelled to pass the Delaware. General Howe is now on the other side, and beyond all question means, if possible, to possess himself of Philadelphia. His troops are extended from Pennington to Burlington; the main body, from the best advices, at the former, and within the neighbourhood of Trenton. I wish it were in my power to tell you, that appearances were much against him; at present I con-

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fess they are not. But few of the militia of this State have yet come out, except those belonging to the city, nor have I any great hope of their assistance, unless we can collect a respectable force; in such case perhaps they will turn out and afford their aid. I have heard, that you are coming on with seven regiments. This may have a happy effect, and let me entreat you not to delay a moment in hastening to Pittstown. You will advise me of your approaches, and of the time you expect to be there, that I may meet you with an express, and inform you of your destination, and such further movements as may be necessary.

I expect General Lee will be there this evening or to-morrow, who will be followed by General Heath and his division. If we can draw our forces together, I trust, under the smiles of Providence, we may yet effect an important stroke, or at least prevent General Howe from executing his plans. Philadelphia is now the object of our care; you know the importance of it, and the fatal consequences, that must attend its loss. I am persuaded no aid, which you can give, will be withheld a single instant; your arrival may be a most happy circumstance. The Congress have adjourned to Baltimore, but previously resolved that Philadelphia should be defended to the last extremity. Lord Stirling is going over to meet General Lee, and concert with him a plan of operations. I wish you could be there, and would advise you not to wait the slow march of your troops. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.*

* On the evening of the 14th a prisoner was brought in, who was a servant in the family of General Vaughan, and who reported that the British were about to return back, and go into winter-quarters. There were afterwards reasons to suppose, that this person was a voluntary prisoner for the purpose of giving delusive intelligence.

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TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL LORD STIRLING.

Head-Quarters, at Keith's, 14 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

Lest the enemy should in some degree avail themselves of the knowledge (for I do not doubt but they are well informed of every thing we do), I did not care to be so particular in the general orders of this day, as I mean to be in this letter to you. As much time, then, would be lost, should the enemy attempt crossing the river at any pass within your guard, in first sending you notice, and in the troops waiting for orders what to do, I would advise you to examine the whole river from the upper to the lower guard of your district; and, after forming an opinion of the most probable crossing-places, let those be well watched, and direct the regiments or companies most convenient to repair, as they can be formed, immediately to the point of attack, and give the enemy all the opposition they possibly can. Every thing in a manner depends upon the defence at the water's edge. In like manner, one brigade is to support another, without loss of time, or waiting for orders from me. I would also have you fix upon some central spot convenient to your brigade, but in the rear a little, and on some road leading into the back road to Philadelphia, for your unnecessary baggage, wagons, and stores; that, in case your opposition should prove ineffectual, these things may not fall into the enemy's hands, but be got off, and taken over Neshaminy Bridge towards Germantown, agreeably to the determination of the board of officers the other day.

Let me entreat you to find out some person, who can be engaged to cross the river as a spy, that we may, if possible, obtain some knowledge of the enemy's situation, movements, and intention. Particular inquiry

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should be made by the person sent, if any preparations are making to cross the river; whether any boats are building, and where; whether any are coming over land from Brunswic; whether any great collection of horses is made, and for what purpose. Expense must not be spared in procuring such intelligence, and it will readily be paid by me. We are in a neighbourhood of very disaffected people. Equal care therefore should be taken, that one of these persons does not undertake the business in order to betray us.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SPENCER.

Head-Quarters, 14 December, 1776.

SIR,

I have just received advices from Governor Trumbull, that a large fleet of the enemy's ships of war and transports were lying off New London, with an intent to make a descent on some part of New England. He desires me to send some general officers to take the command of the militia, who are assembling to make the best opposition in their power. I must therefore request, that you will immediately repair to New England, and take the command at such place as you may find your presence most necessary. I have ordered General

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* A copy of this letter was likewise sent as a circular to Brigadier-Generals Mercer, Stephen, and Fermoy. These Generals were stationed each at the head of a brigade on the west side of the Delaware, beginning at Coryell's Ferry, and extending downwards to Yardley's Ferry, and so posted as to guard every suspicious part of the river. Farther down were General Ewing with the Pennsylvania Flying Camp, and General Dickinson with a few New Jersey troops, forming a guard as far as the Ferry opposite to Bordentown. Next came Colonel Cadwalader with the Pennsylvania militia, and Colonel Nixon with the third Philadelphia battalion.

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Arnold upon the same service, and beg you may coöperate with him in such measures, as will be most conducive to the public good. If any militia should have arrived from New England to replace those, who have lately gone home, you will please to leave as many, as will, in your opinion and that of the commanding officer at the Highlands, be necessary to guard those passes, and take the remainder with you; or if you should meet any on their march up, you will please to let as many proceed as will be necessary for the above purpose (of guarding the Highlands), and take the remainder back with you. I am, Sir, &c. *

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, Bucks County,
14 December, 1776.

SIR,

I was last night favored with yours of the 6th instant. In a letter, which I did myself the pleasure to write to you two days ago, I gave you a full account of my present situation, and of the occurrences, which have happened since I left the neighbourhood of Fort Lee. The want of the means of transportation has hitherto hindered the enemy from making any attempt to cross the Delaware;

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* A week afterwards General Washington wrote to General Spencer, countermanding this order, as follows;—"It is a matter of concern to me, that, in my last, I directed you to take back any of the militia designed for the support of the army under my command, and have to request, that, instead of ordering the return of any of those, that were destined for this department, by order of their respective States, you will hasten them on, with all possible expedition, as I see no other chance of saving Philadelphia, and preventing a fatal blow to America, in the loss of a city from whence so many of our resources are drawn."—*Letter, December 22d.*

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and, I hope, unless the course of the season entirely changes, that the weather will soon prevent their making use of boats, if they should build them.

Your situation at the eastward is alarming; and I wish it were in my power to afford you that assistance, which is requisite.* You must be sensible, that it is impossible for me to detach any part of my small army, when I have an enemy far superior in numbers to oppose. But I have immediately countermanded the march of General Heath's division, which was coming down from Peekskill. It is ordered to return again to that place, and hold itself ready to move, as occasion may require. General Lee's division is so necessary to support this part of the army, that without its assistance we must inevitably be overpowered, and Philadelphia lost. I have ordered General Arnold, who was on his way down from Ticonderoga, immediately to repair to New London, or wherever his presence will be most necessary. The troops, who came down with him and General Gates, are already, from the advices I have received, so far advanced towards this army, that to countermand them now would be losing the small remainder of their services entirely, as the time of their enlistment would expire before they could possibly reach you; whereas, by coming on they may, in conjunction with my present force, and that under General Lee, enable us to attempt a stroke upon the forces of the enemy, who lie a good deal scattered, and to all appearance in a state of security. A lucky blow in this quarter would be fatal to them, and would most cer-

* General Clinton and Earl Percy, with six thousand British troops detached from the main army at New York, took possession of Newport and Rhode Island on the 8th of December. For the letters of General Clinton and Sir Peter Parker relating to this event, see *Remembrancer*, Vol. III. pp. 261, 262.

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tainly rouse the spirits of the people, which are quite sunk by our late misfortunes.

In the interval between the dissolution of the old and the enlistment of the new army, we must put our dependence on the public spirit and virtue of the people, who, I am sorry to say, have manifested but too small a regard to their rights and liberties in the States of New Jersey and Pennsylvania, the citizens of Philadelphia excepted. But I hope such a spirit still exists among your people, as will convince the bold invaders, that, although they may by a superior naval force take possession of your seaport towns, yet, that they cannot penetrate and overrun your country with impunity.

I have the honor to be, with great respect and esteem, Sir, &c.

P. S. I have just received a letter from General Heath of the 10th instant, in which he informs me, that his division was to cross the North River on that day; so that they must be at Morristown by this time, which is but fifty miles from hence. Upon this consideration, I have changed my intention of countermanding him, for the same reasons as are given in my letter above, respecting the troops under Generals Gates and Arnold.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Head-Quarters, at Keith's, 14 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

I last night received your letter of the 11th instant by Major Dehart. I am much surprised, that you should be in any doubt respecting the route you should take, after the information you have had upon that head, as

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well by letter, as from Major Hoops, who was despatched for the purpose. A large number of boats was procured, and is still retained at Tinicum, under a strong guard, to facilitate your passage across the Delaware. I have so frequently mentioned our situation, and the necessity of your aid, that it is painful to me to add a word upon the subject. Let me once more request and entreat you to march immediately for Pittstown, which lies on the route that has been pointed out, and is about eleven miles from Tinicum Ferry. That is more on the flank of the enemy, than where you now are. Advise me of the time you will arrive there, that a letter may be sent to you about your further destination, and such other movements as may be necessary.

The enclosed for Generals Gates and Arnold you will forward by an officer without delay. The former I have requested to come on with the regiments under his command with all possible expedition; the latter to go to the eastward, in consequence of the intelligence received from Governor Trumbull. Part of the enemy have advanced as far as Burlington, and their main body, from the best information, is in the neighbourhood of Trenton and at Pennington. The Congress have adjourned from Philadelphia to meet at Baltimore, on the 20th instant, and, sensible of the importance of the former city, have directed it to be defended to the utmost extremity. The fatal consequences that must attend its loss are but too obvious to every one. Your arrival may be the means of saving it. Nothing but a respectable force, I am certain from melancholy experience, can induce the militia to come in and give their aid. The Roebuck and a sloop of war have arrived in Delaware Bay, and from the last advices were lying not far within the Capes. I have written to General Heath, to proceed immediately with his troops to Pitts-

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town, where I hope to hear of the arrival of General Gates with the regiments that are with him in a short time, if my information is true. I am, &c.

TO THE COUNCIL OF SAFETY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Head-Quarters, Bucks County,
15 December, 1776.

GENTLEMEN,

With the utmost regret, I must inform you of the loss our army has sustained by the captivity of General Lee, who was made a prisoner on the morning of the 13th by a party of seventy of the enemy's light-horse, near a place called Vealtown, in the Jerseys. For the particulars, I refer you to the enclosed from General Sullivan.* The spirit of disaffection, which appears in this country, I think deserves your serious attention. Instead of giving any assistance in repelling the enemy, the militia have not only refused to obey your general summons and that of their commanding officers, but, I am told, exult at the approach of the enemy, and on our late misfortunes. I beg leave, therefore, to submit to your consideration, whether such people are to be trusted with arms in their hands. If they will not use them for us, there is the greatest reason to apprehend they will against us, if opportunity should offer. But, even supposing they claimed the right of remaining neuter, in my opinion we ought not to hesitate a moment in taking their arms, which will be so much wanted in furnishing the new levies. If such a step meet your approbation, I leave to you to determine upon the mode. If you think fit to empower me, I will undertake to have

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* See APPENDIX, No. VIII.

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it done as speedily and effectually as possible. You must be sensible, that the utmost secrecy is necessary, both in your deliberations on, and in the execution of, a matter of this kind; for, if the thing should take wind, the arms would presently be conveyed beyond our reach, or rendered useless.

I am glad to find, that the militia of Lancaster county are in motion; and I am in hopes, that General Mifflin's appearance in the different counties will have as good an effect as it had in Philadelphia. I have received information, that the body of the enemy, which lay at Pennington under Lord Cornwallis, moved this morning back towards Princeton. If it be so, it looks as if they were going into winter-quarters; and this corresponds with the account brought last night by a prisoner, a servant belonging to General Vaughan's family, who says, that he heard his master talk of going soon into winter-quarters. The troops, who lay at Trenton, are likewise filing off towards Allentown and Bordentown with their baggage, which makes me conjecture they are taking the road to South Amboy. I have a number of small parties out to make discoveries; and, if the motions of the enemy are really such as I have mentioned above, I shall soon have information of it. In the mean time, my troops are so stationed, as to prevent them from crossing the river at any place without our knowledge. But I am in great hopes, that the disappointment in boats and the lateness of the season, which now begins to put on the face of winter, will prevent their making any attempt on Philadelphia till spring. This, however, should not in the least slacken your exertions in making the necessary preparations for the fortification and defence of the city by land and water; for you may be assured that will be their first and great object in the spring. I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, at Keith's, 16 December, 1776.

SIR,

In a late letter, which I had the honor of addressing to you, I took the liberty to recommend, that more battalions should be raised for the new army, than what had been voted. Having fully considered the matter, I am more and more convinced, not only of the propriety, but of the necessity of the measure. That the enemy will leave nothing unessayed, in the course of the next campaign, to reduce these States to the rule of a most lawless and insufferable tyranny, must be obvious to every one; and that the militia are not to be depended on, or aid expected from them but in cases of the most pressing emergency, is not to be doubted. The first of these propositions is unquestionable, and fatal experience has given its sanction to the truth of the latter. Indeed, their lethargy of late, and backwardness to turn out at this alarming crisis, seem to justify an apprehension, that nothing can bring them from their homes. For want of their assistance, a large part of Jersey has been exposed to ravage and to plunder; nor do I know that Pennsylvania would share a better fate, could General Howe effect a passage across the Delaware with a respectable force. These considerations have induced me to wish, that no reliance, except such as may arise from necessity, should ever be had on them again; and to make further mention to Congress of the expediency of increasing their army. I trust the measure will meet with their earliest attention.

Had I leisure and were it necessary, I could say much upon this head; but, as I have not, and the matter is well understood, I will not add much. By augmenting the number of your battalions, you will augment

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your force; the officers of each will have their interest and influence; and, upon the whole, their numbers will be much greater, though they should not be complete. Added to this, from the present confused state of Jersey, and the improper appointment of officers in many instances, I have little or no expectation that she will be able to raise all the troops exacted from her, though I think it might be done, were suitable spirited gentlemen commissioned, who would exert themselves, and encourage the people, many of whom (from a failure in this instance, and who are well disposed,) are making their submission. In a word, the next will be a trying campaign; and as all that is dear and valuable may depend upon the issue of it, I would advise, that nothing should be omitted, that shall seem necessary to our success. Let us have a respectable army, and such as will be competent to every exigency. I will also add, that the critical situation of our affairs, and the dissolution of our present force, now at hand, require, that every nerve and exertion be employed for recruiting the new battalions. One part of General Howe's movements at this time, I believe, is with a design to distract us and prevent this business. If the inclemency of the weather should force him into winter-quarters, he will not remain there longer than necessity shall oblige him; he will commence his operations in a short space of time; and in that time our levies must be made up, to oppose him, or I fear the most melancholy of all events must take place.

The enclosed extracts of a letter from the commissary-general will show his demands for money, and his plans for procuring proper supplies of salted provisions and a quantity of flour from the southward. The whole is submitted to the consideration of Congress.

I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, 17 December, 1776.

SIR,

I would beg leave to recall your attention to the proposition for the exchange of prisoners, in the several letters I have lately written on that subject, and to inform you, that I have not received such officers in exchange as were requested by me. I am persuaded, Sir, that this mistake has arisen from Mr. Commissary Loring's zeal to facilitate the business; but I would at the same time desire that you would give him orders, whenever any of your officers are sent in by me, not to send others in exchange, till he is furnished with a list from me, of such as I would choose to prefer, which shall always be done as soon as possible. For as the prisoners seldom pass my head-quarters on their way, it is not in my power to transmit such lists by them, without occasioning their delay. If this mode is not complied with in future, I shall be under the disagreeable necessity of stopping others from going in, as my ideas and expectations are by no means answered by what has happened. I am, with due respect, Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, Bucks County, 18 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

By a letter just received from the State of Massachusetts, I find that they had ordered six thousand militia to be immediately raised, and appointed the place of rendezvous at Danbury in Connecticut, where they are to meet General Lincoln, who is to take the command.

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You will perceive from the tenor of the letter, that the appearance of the men of war and transports off the coast of New England did not seem to alter their intention of sending the militia forward; but I am inclined to think, if the descent should really be made, they will find employ for them nearer home. If this considerable reinforcement should arrive with you, I do not know how you could better employ them, or render more essential service to the cause, than, after keeping a sufficient force to guard the passes of the Highlands, by throwing such a number over into Jersey, as would cover the upper parts of that province, and afford such support and assistance to the well affected, as would encourage them to join you and keep the enemy within straiter bounds, than they are at present. You may depend, that the great end they have in view is to spread themselves over as much country as they possibly can, and thereby strike a damp into the spirits of the people, which will effectually put a stop to the new enlistment of the army, on which all our hopes depend, and which they will most vigorously strive to effect. To carry this plan into execution, they have already extended themselves as far westward as the Delaware, and if the whole of your army continues on the east side of Hudson's River, they will have possession of all the country between that river and the Delaware, which includes the whole province of Jersey and part of New York. As soon as you find yourself in a situation to send a force into the upper parts of Jersey, I would have you immediately communicate your intentions to the people, with assurances that you will be ready to back and support them in any movements, which they may make in your favor. I am certain, that the defection of the people in the lower part of Jersey has been as much owing to the want of an army to look the en-

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emy in the face, as to any other cause, though to be sure neither cost nor pains have been spared to influence them against us.

Whatever steps you take in this affair, I would wish you to consult and coöperate with General Lincoln, of whose judgment and abilities I entertain a very high opinion. I would just add, that your attention should likewise be paid to the country between Peekskill and Kingsbridge, by affording some protection and countenance to the people there, from whom you may draw supplies and perhaps some men for the new army. Particular attention should be paid to the bridge at Croton River, which secures your front. I enclose to you a letter for General Lincoln, which please to forward to him wherever he may be. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

Camp, near the Falls of Trenton,
18 December, 1776.

DEAR BROTHER,

Owing to the number of letters I write, the recollection of any particular one is effaced, but I think my last to you was from Hackinsac by Colonel Woodford. Since that time, and a little before, our affairs have taken an adverse turn, but not more than was to be expected from the unfortunate measures, which had been adopted for the establishment of our army. The retreat of the enemy from White Plains led me to think, that they would turn their thoughts to the Jerseys, if not farther, and induced me to cross the North River with some of the troops, in order if possible to oppose them. I expected to meet at least five thousand men of the Flying Camp and militia; instead of which

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I found less than half of that number, and no disposition in the inhabitants to afford the least aid. This being perfectly well known to the enemy, they threw over a large body of troops, which pushed us from place to place, till we were obliged to cross the Delaware with less than three thousand men fit for duty, owing to the dissolution of our force by short enlistments; the enemy's numbers, from the best accounts, exceeding ten or twelve thousand men.

Before I removed to the south side of the river, I had all the boats and other vessels brought over, or destroyed, from Philadelphia upwards for seventy miles, and, by guarding the fords, I have, as yet, baffled all their attempts to cross. But, from some late movements of theirs, I am in doubt whether they are moving off for winter-quarters, or making a feint to throw us off our guard. Since I came on this side, I have been joined by about two thousand of the city militia, and I understand, that some of the country militia, from the back counties, are on their way. But we are in a very disaffected part of the province; and, between you and me, I think our affairs are in a very bad condition; not so much from the apprehension of General Howe's army, as from the defection of New York, the Jerseys, and Pennsylvania. In short, the conduct of the Jerseys has been most infamous. Instead of turning out to defend their country, and affording aid to our army, they are making their submissions as fast as they can. If the Jerseys had given us any support, we might have made a stand at Hackinsac, and after that at Brunswic; but the few militia, that were in arms, disbanded themselves and left the poor remains of our army to make the best we could of it.

I have no doubt but General Howe will still make an attempt upon Philadelphia this winter. I foresee no-

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thing to oppose him a fortnight hence, as the time of all the troops, except those of Virginia, now reduced almost to nothing, and Smallwood's regiment of Marylanders, equally as low, will expire before the end of that time. In a word, my dear Sir, if every nerve is not strained to recruit the new army with all possible expedition, I think the game is pretty nearly up, owing, in a great measure, to the insidious arts of the enemy, and disaffection of the colonies before mentioned, but principally to the ruinous policy of short enlistments, and placing too great a dependence on the militia, the evil consequences of which were foretold fifteen months ago, with a spirit almost prophetic. Before you receive this letter, you will undoubtedly have heard of the captivity of General Lee. This is an additional misfortune, and the more vexatious, as it was by his own folly and imprudence, and without a view to effect any good, that he was taken. As he went to lodge three miles out of his own camp, and within twenty of the enemy, a rascally Tory rode in the night to give notice of it to the enemy, who sent a party of light-horse that seized him, and carried him off, with every mark of triumph and indignity.

You can form no idea of the perplexity of my situation. No man, I believe, ever had a greater choice of difficulties, and less means to extricate himself from them. However, under a full persuasion of the justice of our cause, I cannot entertain an idea, that it will finally sink, though it may remain for some time under a cloud.

My love and sincere regards attend my sister and the family, with compliments to all inquiring friends. With every sentiment of friendship, as well as love, I am your most affectionate brother.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, above Trenton Falls, 20 December, 1776.

SIR,

I have waited with much impatience to know the determination of Congress on the propositions, made some time in October last, for augmenting our corps of artillery, and establishing a corps of engineers. The time is now come, when the first cannot be delayed without the greatest injury to the safety of these States; and, therefore, under the resolution of Congress bearing date the 12th instant, at the repeated instances of Colonel Knox, and by the pressing advice of all the general officers now here, I have ventured to order three battalions of artillery to be immediately recruited.* These are two less than Colonel Knox recommends, as you will see by his plan enclosed; but then this scheme comprehends all the United States, whereas some of the States have corps already established, and these three battalions are indispensably necessary for the operations in this quarter, including the northern department.

The pay of our artillerists bearing no proportion to that in the English or French service, the murmuring and dissatisfaction thereby occasioned, the absolute impossibility, as I am told, of getting them upon the old terms, and the unavoidable necessity of obtaining them

* Congress hastily adjourned on the 12th, and at the same time "Resolved, that, until Congress shall otherwise order, General Washington be possessed of full power to order and direct all things relative to the department and to the operations of war." Under this general power he was of course authorized to recruit men and order them into the service without consulting Congress. On the 12th of December it was likewise decided, that a regiment of cavalry should be raised on the Continental establishment, and Elisha Sheldon was appointed lieutenant-colonel commandant.

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at all events, have induced me, also by advice, to promise officers and men, that their pay shall be augmented twenty-five per cent, or that their engagements shall become null and void. This may appear to Congress premature and unwarrantable. But, Sir, if they view our situation in the light it strikes their officers, they will be convinced of the utility of the measure, and that the execution could not be delayed till after their meeting at Baltimore. In short, the present exigency of our affairs will not admit of delay, either in council or the field; for well convinced I am, that, if the enemy go into quarters at all, it will be for a short season. But I rather think the design of General Howe is to possess himself of Philadelphia this winter, if possible; and in truth I do not see what is to prevent him, as ten days more will put an end to the existence of our army. That one great point is to keep us as much harassed as possible, with a view to injure the recruiting service and hinder a collection of stores and other necessaries for the next campaign, I am as clear in, as I am of my existence. If, therefore, in the short interval in which we have to provide for and make these great and arduous preparations, every matter that in its nature is self-evident is to be referred to Congress, at the distance of a hundred and thirty or forty miles, so much time must necessarily elapse, as to defeat the end in view.

It may be said, that this is an application for powers that are too dangerous to be entrusted. I can only add, that desperate diseases require desperate remedies; and I with truth declare, that I have no lust after power, but I wish with as much fervency as any man upon this wide-extended continent for an opportunity of turning the sword into the ploughshare. But my feelings, as an officer and a man, have been such as to

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force me to say, that no person ever had a greater choice of difficulties to contend with than I have. It is needless to add, that short enlistments, and a mistaken dependence upon militia, have been the origin of all our misfortunes, and the great accumulation of our debt. We find, Sir, that the enemy are daily gathering strength from the disaffected. This strength, like a snow-ball by rolling, will increase, unless some means can be devised to check effectually the progress of the enemy's arms. Militia may possibly do it for a little while; but in a little while, also, and the militia of those States, which have been frequently called upon, will not turn out at all; or, if they do, it will be with so much reluctance and sloth, as to amount to the same thing. Instance New Jersey! Witness Pennsylvania! Could any thing but the river Delaware have saved Philadelphia? Can any thing (the exigency of the case indeed may justify it) be more destructive to the recruiting service, than giving ten dollars' bounty for six weeks' service of the militia, who come in, you cannot tell how, go, you cannot tell when, and act, you cannot tell where, consume your provisions, exhaust your stores, and leave you at last at a critical moment?

These, Sir, are the men I am to depend upon, ten days hence; this is the basis, on which your cause will and must for ever depend, till you get a large standing army sufficient of itself to oppose the enemy. I therefore beg leave to give it as my humble opinion, that eighty-eight battalions are by no means equal to the opposition you are to make, and that a moment's time is not to be lost in raising a greater number, not less, in my opinion and the opinion of my officers, than a hundred and ten. It may be urged, that it will be found difficult enough to complete the first number. This may be true, and yet the officers of a hundred and ten

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battalions will recruit many more men, than those of eighty-eight. In my judgment this is not a time to stand upon expense; our funds are not the only object of consideration. The State of New York have added one battalion (I wish they had made it two) to their quota. If any good officers will offer to raise men upon Continental pay and establishment in this quarter, I shall encourage them to do so, and regiment them when they have done it. If Congress disapprove of this proceeding, they will please to signify it, as I mean it for the best. It may be thought that I am going a good deal out of the line of my duty, to adopt these measures, or to advise thus freely. A character to lose, an estate to forfeit, the inestimable blessings of liberty at stake, and a life devoted, must be my excuse.

I have heard nothing of the light-horse from Virginia, nor of the regiment from the Eastern Shore.* I wish to know what troops are to act in the different departments, and to have those from the southward, designed for this place, ordered on as fast as they shall be raised. The route should be pointed out by which they are to march; assistant commissaries and quartermasters stationed upon the communication, to supply their wants; the first or second officer of each battalion should forward them, and the other should come on, receive, and form them at their place of destination. Unless this is immediately set about, the campaign, if it should be closed, will be opened in the spring before we have any men in the field. Every exertion should be used to procure tents; a clothier-general should be appointed without loss of time for supplying the army with every article in that way; he should be a man of business and abilities. A commissary of prisoners must be appointed

* The eastern shore of the Chesapeake Bay.

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to attend the army; for want of an officer of this kind, the exchange of prisoners has been conducted in a most shameful and injurious manner. We have had them from all quarters pushed into our camps at the most critical junctures, and without the least previous notice. We have had them travelling through the different States in all directions by certificates from committees, without any kind of control; and have had instances of some going into the enemy's camp without my privity or knowledge, after passing in the manner before mentioned. There may be other officers necessary, whom I do not recollect at this time, and who, when thought of, must be provided; for this, Sir, you may rely on, that the commanding officer, under the present establishment, is obliged to attend to the business of so many different departments, as to render it impossible to conduct that of his own with the attention necessary; than which nothing can be more injurious.

In a former letter, I intimated my opinion of the necessity of having a brigadier for every three regiments, and a major-general to every three brigades, at most. I think no time is to be lost in making the appointments, that the arrangements may be consequent. This will not only aid the recruiting service, but will be the readiest means of forming and disciplining the army afterwards, which, in the short time we have to do it, is of amazing consequence. I have labored, ever since I have been in the service, to discourage all kinds of local attachments and distinctions of country, denominating the whole by the greater name of AMERICAN, but I have found it impossible to overcome prejudices; and, under the new establishment, I conceive it best to stir up an emulation; in order to do which, would it not be better for each State to furnish, though not to appoint, their own brigadiers? This, if known to be part of the es-

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tablishment, might prevent a good deal of contention and jealousy; and would, I believe, be the means of promotions going forward with more satisfaction, and quiet the higher officers.*

Whilst I am speaking of promotions, I cannot help giving it as my opinion, that, if Congress think proper to confirm what I have done with respect to the corps of artillery, Colonel Knox, at present at the head of that department (but who, without promotion, will resign), ought to be appointed to the command of it, with the rank and pay of brigadier. I have also to mention, that, for want of some establishment in the department of engineers agreeably to the plan laid before Congress in October last, Colonel Putnam, who was at the head of it, has quitted, and taken a regiment in the State of Massachusetts. I know of no other man tolerably well qualified for the conducting of that business. None of the French gentlemen, whom I have seen with appointments in that way, appear to me to know any thing of the matter. There is one in Philadelphia, who, I am

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* The evil effects, which had sprung from local prejudices, are strongly described in a letter from Robert Morris to General Washington.

"It is useless," says Mr. Morris, "at this period to examine into the causes of our present unhappy situation, unless that examination would be productive of a cure for the evils which surround us. In fact, those causes have long been known to such, as would open their eyes. The very consequences of them were foretold and the measures execrated by some of the best friends of America; but in vain; an obstinate partiality to the habits and customs of one part of this continent has predominated in the public councils, and too little attention has been paid to others. To criminate the authors of our errors would not avail, but we cannot see ruin staring us in the face without thinking of them. It has been my fate to make an ineffectual opposition to all short enlistments, to colonial appointment of officers, and to many other measures, which I thought pregnant with mischief; but these things either suited with the genius and habits, or squared with the interests, of some States, that had sufficient influence to prevail, and nothing is now left, but to extricate ourselves as well as we can."—*MS. Letter, December 23d.*

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told, is clever; but him I have never seen. I must also once more beg leave to mention to Congress the expediency of letting promotions be in a regimental line. The want of this has already driven some of the best officers, that were in your army, out of the service. From repeated and strict inquiry I am convinced, that you can adopt no mode of promotion that will be better received, or that will give more general satisfaction. I wish therefore to have it announced.

The casting of cannon is a matter, that ought not to be one moment delayed; and, therefore, I shall send Colonel Knox to put this in train, as also to have travelling-carriages and shot provided, and laboratories established, one in Hartford, and another in York. Magazines of provisions should also be laid in. These I shall fix with the commissary. As our great loss last year proceeded from a want of teams, I shall direct the quartermaster-general to furnish a certain number to each regiment to answer the common purposes thereof, that the army may be enabled to remove from place to place differently from what we have done, or could do, this campaign. Ammunition-carts, and proper carts for intrenching tools, should also be provided, and I shall direct about them accordingly. Above all, a store of small arms should be provided, or men will be of little use. The consumption and waste of these, this year, have been great. Militia and Flying-Camp men coming in without them were obliged to be furnished, or become useless. Many of these threw their arms away; some lost them, whilst others deserted, and took them away. In a word, although I used every precaution to preserve them, the loss has been great; and this will for ever be the case, in such a mixed and irregular army as ours has been.

If no part of the troops already embarked at New

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York has appeared in Virginia, their destination doubtless must be to some other quarter; and that State must, I should think, be freed from any invasion, if General Howe can be effectually opposed in this. I therefore enclose a memorandum, given me by Brigadier Stephen of Virginia, which Congress will please to adopt in the whole, in part, or reject, as may be consistent with their plans and intelligence.

The division of the army, lately under the command of General Lee, now of General Sullivan, is just upon the point of joining us. A strange kind of fatality has attended it. They had orders on the 17th of November to join, now more than a month. General Gates, with four eastern regiments, is also near at hand; three others from those States were coming on, by his order, by the way of Peekskill, and had joined General Heath, whom I had ordered on with Parsons's brigade, to join me, leaving Clinton's brigade and some militia, that were at Forts Montgomery and Constitution, to guard those important passes of the Highlands. But the Convention of the State of New York seeming to be much alarmed at Heath's coming away, a fleet appearing off New London, and some part of the enemy's troops retiring towards Brunswic, induced me to countermand the order for the march of Parsons's brigade, and to direct the three regiments from Ticonderoga to halt at Morristown in Jersey (where I understand about eight hundred militia had collected), in order to inspirit the inhabitants, and, as far as possible, to cover that part of the country. I shall send General Maxwell this day to take the command of them, and, if to be done, to harass and annoy the enemy in their quarters, and cut off their convoys. The care and vigilance, which were used in securing the boats on this river, have hitherto baffled every attempt of the enemy to cross; but, from con-

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curring reports and appearances, they are waiting for ice to afford them a passage.

Since writing the foregoing I have received a letter from Governor Cooke of Rhode Island, of which the enclosed is a copy. Previous to this, and immediately upon the first intelligence obtained of a fleet's going through the Sound, I despatched orders to Generals Spencer and Arnold to proceed without delay to the eastward. The first I presume is gone. The latter, not getting my letter till he came to a place called Easton, was, by advice of General Gates, who also met my letter at the same place, induced to come on hither before he proceeded to the eastward. Most of our brigadiers are laid up. Not one has come on with the division under General Sullivan, but they are left sick at different places on the road.

By accounts from the eastward, a large body of men had assembled in Rhode Island from the States of Massachusetts and Connecticut. I presume, but I have no advice of it, that the militia ordered from the first to rendezvous at Danbury, six thousand in number, under the command of Major-General Lincoln, for supplying the place of the disbanded men of that State in the Continental army, will now be ordered to Rhode Island. In speaking of General Lincoln, I should not do him justice, were I not to add, that he is a gentleman well worthy of notice in the military line. He commanded the militia from Massachusetts last summer, or fall rather, and much to my satisfaction, having proved himself on all occasions an active, spirited, sensible man. I do not know whether it is his wish to remain in the military line, or whether, if he should, any thing under the rank he now holds in the State he comes from would satisfy him. How far an appointment of this kind might offend the Continental brigadiers, I cannot.

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undertake to say; many there are, over whom he ought not to be placed; but I know of no way to discriminate. Brigadier Reed of New Hampshire does not, I presume, mean to continue in the service; he ought not, as I am told, by the severity of the smallpox, he is become both blind and deaf. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. Generals Gates and Sullivan have this instant come in. By them I learn, that few or no men are recruited out of the regiments coming on with them, and that there is very little reason to expect, that these regiments will be prevailed upon to continue after their term of service expires. If militia then do not come in, the consequences are but too evident.

TO COLONEL JOSEPH REED,

OR COLONEL JOHN CADWALADER,* AT BRISTOL.

Camp, above Trenton Falls, 23 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

The bearer is sent down to know whether your plan was attempted last night, and if not to inform you, that Christmas-day at night, one hour before day, is the time fixed upon for our attempt on Trenton. For Heaven's sake, keep this to yourself, as the discovery of it may prove fatal to us; our numbers, sorry am I to say, being less than I had any conception of; but necessity, dire necessity, will, nay must, justify an attack. Prepare, and, in concert with Griffin, attack as many of their posts as you possibly can with a prospect of success; the more we can attack at the same instant, the more con-

* Brother to Colonel Lambert Cadwalader, of the Continental service.

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fusion we shall spread, and the greater good will result from it. If I had not been fully convinced before of the enemy's designs, I have now ample testimony of their intentions to attack Philadelphia, so soon as the ice will afford the means of conveyance.

As the colonels of the Continental regiments might kick up some dust about command, unless Cadwalader is considered by them in the light of a brigadier, which I wish him to be, I desired General Gates, who is unwell, and applied for leave to go to Philadelphia, to endeavour, if his health would permit him, to call and stay two or three days at Bristol in his way. I shall not be particular; we could not ripen matters for an attack, before the time mentioned in the first part of this letter; so much out of sorts, and so much in want of every thing, are the troops under Sullivan. The letter herewith sent, forward on to Philadelphia; I could wish it to be in time for the southern post's departure, which will be I believe by eleven o'clock to-morrow.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

P. S. I have ordered our men to be provided with three days' provisions ready cooked, with which and their blankets they are to march; for if we are successful, which Heaven grant, and the circumstances favor, we may push on. I shall direct every ferry and ford to be well guarded, and not a soul suffered to pass without an officer's going down with the permit. Do the same with you.*

* The above letter I have not found among General Washington's papers. It is copied from Wilkinson's *Memoirs*, but it bears the mark of being genuine. The "plan," mentioned at the beginning of the letter, is not explained. It was probably a scheme for crossing the river and surprising an advanced party of the enemy.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, above Trenton Falls, 24 December, 1776.

SIR,

That I should dwell upon the subject of our distresses, cannot be more disagreeable to Congress than it is painful to myself. The alarming situation, to which our affairs are reduced, impels me to the measure. Inquiry and investigation, which in most cases serve to develope and point out a remedy, in ours present more and greater difficulties. Till of late, I was led to hope from report, that no inconsiderable part of the troops composing the regiments that were with General Lee, and those from Ticonderoga under General Gates, had enlisted again. This intelligence, I confess, gave me reason to expect, that I should have, at the expiration of the present year, a force somewhat more respectable, than what I find will be the case.

Having examined into the state of those regiments, I am authorized to say from the information of their officers, that but very few of the men have enlisted. Those, who have, are of the troops from Ticonderoga, and were permitted to visit their friends and homes, as part of the terms on which they would reëngage. In respect to those, who marched with General Lee, I cannot learn that any have. Their refusal, I am told, has not proceeded more from an aversion to the service, or any fixed determination not to engage again, than from their wishes to return home, the non-appointment of officers in some instances, the turning out of good and appointing of bad in others, and the incomplete or rather no arrangement of them, a work unhappily committed to the management of their States; nor have I the most distant prospect of retaining them a moment longer than the last of this month, notwithstanding the

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most pressing solicitations and the obvious necessity for it. By the departure of these regiments I shall be left with five from Virginia, Smallwood's from Maryland, a small part of Rawlings's, Hand's from Pennsylvania, a part of Ward's from Connecticut, and the German battalion, comprising in the whole at this time from fourteen to fifteen hundred effective men. This handful, and such militia as may choose to join me, will then compose our army.*

When I reflect upon these things, they fill me with much concern, knowing that General Howe has a number of troops cantoned in the towns bordering on and near the Delaware, and his intentions to pass, as soon as the ice is sufficiently formed, to invade Pennsylvania and to possess himself of Philadelphia if possible. To guard against his designs, and the execution of them, shall employ my every exertion; but how is this to be done? As yet but few militia have gone to Philadelphia, and they are to be our support at this alarming crisis. Had I entertained a doubt of General Howe's intentions to pass the Delaware, on the dissolution of our army, and as soon as the ice is made, it would now be done away. An intercepted letter from a gentleman of Philadelphia, who has joined the enemy, to his friend and partner in the city, declares that to be their design, that the army would be there in ten or twenty days

* By the adjutant's return on the 22d of December, the army under Washington amounted to *ten thousand one hundred and six* men rank and file. Of this number *five thousand three hundred and ninety-nine* were sick, on command, and on furlough; leaving an immediate effective force of *four thousand seven hundred and seven*. But this return did not include the four regiments just arrived from the northern army, nor Lee's division now commanded by Sullivan, nor the Pennsylvania militia under General Cadwalader at Bristol. The four regiments, having been greatly reduced by disease, amounted to about twelve hundred, Cadwalader's militia to eighteen hundred, and Sullivan's division to about three thousand.

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from the 16th instant, the time of his writing, if the ice should be made; it advises him by no means to remove their stores, as they would be safe.

The obstacles, which have arisen to the raising of the new army, from the mode of appointing the officers, induce me to hope, if Congress resolve on an additional number of battalions to those already voted, that they will devise some other rule by which the officers, especially the field-officers, should be appointed. In case an augmentation should be made to the eastern regiments, a deviation from the former mode will operate more strongly as to them than to other battalions, because there have been many more officers in service from those States, than the regiments voted to be raised would admit of; by which means several deserving men could not have been provided for, had the utmost pains been used for the purpose; and many others of merit have been neglected in the late appointments, and those of little worth and less experience put in their places or promoted over their heads. This has been the case with many of the best officers.

The enclosed letter from the paymaster-general will show the state of the military chest, and the necessity of a large and immediate supply of cash. The advances to the officers, for bounty and the recruiting service, are great; besides, the regiments, at the expiration of this month, will require payment of their claims. At the same time it will show the injustice of the clamors, made by some of the officers respecting their pay, and the abuses, that have resulted from an attention to them. Whenever they have not been paid, it was because their abstracts were not made up.

I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Newtown, 27 December, 1776.

SIR,

I have the pleasure of congratulating you upon the success of an enterprise, which I had formed against a detachment of the enemy lying in Trenton, and which was executed yesterday morning. The evening of the 25th I ordered the troops intended for this service to parade back of McKonkey's Ferry, that they might begin to pass as soon as it grew dark, imagining we should be able to throw them all over, with the necessary artillery, by twelve o'clock, and that we might easily arrive at Trenton by five in the morning, the distance being about nine miles. But the quantity of ice, made that night, impeded the passage of the boats so much, that it was three o'clock before the artillery could all be got over; and near four, before the troops took up their line of march. This made me despair of surprising the town, as I well knew we could not reach it before the day was fairly broke. But as I was certain there was no making a retreat without being discovered and harassed on repassing the river, I determined to push on at all events. I formed my detachment into two divissions, one to march by the lower or river road, the other by the upper or Pennington road. As the divisions had nearly the same distance to march, I ordered each of them, immediately upon forcing the out-guards, to push directly into the town, that they might charge the enemy before they had time to form.

The upper division arrived at the enemy's advanced post exactly at eight o'clock; and in three minutes after, I found, from the fire on the lower road, that that division had also got up. The out-guards made but small opposition, though, for their numbers, they behaved very

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well, keeping up a constant retreating fire from behind houses. We presently saw their main body formed; but, from their motions, they seemed undetermined how to act. Being hard pressed by our troops, who had already got possession of their artillery, they attempted to file off by a road on their right, leading to Princeton. But, perceiving their intention, I threw a body of troops in their way, which immediately checked them. Finding from our disposition, that they were surrounded, and that they must inevitably be cut to pieces if they made any further resistance, they agreed to lay down their arms. The number that submitted in this manner was twenty-three officers and eight hundred and eighty-six men. Colonel Rahl, the commanding officer, and seven others were found wounded in the town. I do not exactly know how many were killed; but I fancy not above twenty or thirty, as they never made any regular stand. Our loss is very trifling indeed, only two officers and one or two privates wounded.

I find that the detachment of the enemy consisted of the three Hessian regiments of Anspach, Knyphausen, and Rahl, amounting to about fifteen hundred men, and a troop of British light-horse; but, immediately upon the beginning of the attack, all those, who were not killed or taken, pushed directly down the road towards Bordentown. These would likewise have fallen into our hands, could my plan have been completely carried into execution. General Ewing was to have crossed before day at Trenton Ferry, and taken possession of the bridge leading out of town; but the quantity of ice was so great, that, though he did every thing in his power to effect it, he could not get over. This difficulty also hindered General Cadwalader from crossing with the Pennsylvania militia from Bristol. He got part of his foot over; but, finding it impossible to embark his

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artillery, he was obliged to desist. I am fully confident, that, could the troops under Generals Ewing and Cadwalader have passed the river, I should have been able with their assistance to drive the enemy from all their posts below Trenton. But the numbers I had with me being inferior to theirs below me, and a strong battalion of light infantry being at Princeton above me, I thought it most prudent to return the same evening with the prisoners and the artillery we had taken. We found no stores of any consequence in the town.*

In justice to the officers and men, I must add, that their behaviour upon this occasion reflects the highest honor upon them. The difficulty of passing the river in a very severe night, and their march through a violent storm of snow and hail, did not in the least abate their ardor; but, when they came to the charge, each seemed to vie with the other in pressing forward; and were I to give a preference to any particular corps, I should do great injustice to the others. Colonel Baylor, my first aid-de-camp, will have the honor of delivering this to you; and from him you may be made acquainted with

* By a letter from General Cadwalader, dated at Bristol, it would seem that he made every exertion in his power to cross over. "The river was so full of ice," he observes, "that it was impossible to pass above Bristol where I intended; and therefore I concluded to make an attempt at Dunks's Ferry. As soon as it was dark, I sent down all the boats I could muster, and marched down about eight o'clock. I embarked a few men to line the river, and prevent any persons from escaping to give intelligence to the enemy; and these were followed by a part of the first battalion of militia, then two field-pieces, with which I went over to see if it was practicable to land them; and upon examination I found it was impossible, the ice being very thick. Upon proposing this to the field-officers, they were all of opinion, that it would not be proper to proceed without cannon. During this time the third battalion was landed. We concluded to withdraw the troops, that had passed, but could not effect it till near four o'clock in the morning. The whole then were ordered to march for Bristol. I imagine the badness of the night must have prevented you from passing over as you intended."—*MS. Letter, December 26th.*

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many other particulars. His spirited behaviour upon every occasion requires me to recommend him to your particular notice. I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Head-Quarters, 28 December, 1776.

DEAR SIR,

Since I had the pleasure of informing you yesterday of our success at Trenton, I have received advice that Count Donop, with the remainder of the enemy's army, immediately upon receiving the news, decamped, and was on his retreat towards South Amboy. On hearing this, Colonel Cadwalader and General Ewing passed the river with the troops under their command, and General Mifflin will follow this day, with a considerable body of militia from Pennsylvania, from whence large reinforcements are coming in. I purpose to go over myself, with the whole of the Continental troops, as soon as they are refreshed and recovered from their late fatigue. These, added together, will make our force very respectable. I have written to General McDougall and General Maxwell, who are at Morristown, and have desired them to collect as large a body of militia as they possibly can, and, whether the enemy advances or retreats, to harass them on flank and rear; or, if they cannot be brought to that, to keep them embodied till they are joined by our regular troops. Things being in

* Colonel Baylor took with him also a Hessian standard, which, with this despatch, he delivered to Congress. After receiving them, Congress voted, that a horse properly caparisoned for the service should be presented to Colonel Baylor, and that he should be recommended to General Washington for promotion to the command of a regiment of light-horse, with the same rank as Colonel Sheldon, lately appointed to the same command. — *Journals, January 1st*, 1777. See APPENDIX, No. IX.

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this situation, I think a fair opportunity is offered of driving the enemy entirely from Jersey, or at least to the extremity of the province. I would therefore have you advance with the eastern militia, as rapidly as the season will admit, by the way of Hackinsac, and proceed downwards till you hear from me. I do not think there is the least danger of the enemy's making any move towards the Highlands at this season of the year. That they cannot do it by water is certain.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Newtown, 29 December, 1776.

Sir,

I am just setting out to attempt a second passage over the Delaware, with the troops that were with me on the morning of the 26th. I am determined to effect it if possible; but I know that it will be attended with much fatigue and difficulty on account of the ice, which will neither allow us to cross on foot, nor give us an easy passage with boats. General Cadwalader crossed from Bristol on the 27th, and, by his letter of yesterday, was at Bordentown with about eighteen hundred men.*

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* General Cadwalader passed over very early in the morning of the 27th, with fifteen hundred of the Pennsylvania militia, without knowing that Washington had recrossed the Delaware. He was informed of this movement after a large part of his men had landed on the Jersey side, and at ten o'clock he wrote from Burlington to the Commander-in-chief,— "As this defeated the scheme of joining your army, we were much embarrassed which way to proceed. I thought it most prudent to retreat; but Colonel Reed was of opinion, that we might safely proceed to Burlington, and recommended it warmly, lest it should have a bad effect on the militia, who were twice disappointed. The landing in open daylight must have alarmed the enemy, or we might have been cut off by all their force collected at this place. We had intelligence immediately after landing, that

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In addition to these, General Mifflin sent over five hundred from Philadelphia on Friday, three hundred yesterday evening from Burlington, and will follow to-day with seven or eight hundred more. I have taken every precaution in my power for subsisting the troops, and shall, without loss of time, and as soon as circumstances will admit of it, pursue the enemy in their retreat, try to beat up more of their quarters, and, in a word, adopt in every instance such measures as the exigency of our affairs requires, and our situation will justify.

Had it not been for the unhappy failure of Generals Ewing and Cadwalader in their attempts to pass, on the night of the 25th, and if the several concerted attacks could have been made, I have no doubt that our views would have succeeded to our warmest expectations. What was done occasioned the enemy to leave their several posts on the Delaware with great precipitation. The peculiar distresses to which the troops, who were with me, were reduced by the severities of cold, rain, snow, and storm, the charge of the prisoners they had taken, and another reason that might be mentioned, and the little prospect of receiving succours on account of the season and situation of the river, would not authorize a further pursuit at that time. Since transmittting the list of prisoners, a few more have been discovered and taken in Trenton; among them a lieutenant-colonel

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the enemy had left the Black Horse and Mount Holly. Upon this we determined to advance to Burlington. Colonel Reed and two other officers went on from one post to another, till they came to Bordentown, where they found the coast clear. We shall march at four to-morrow morning for that place." Accordingly he reached Bordentown the next day about noon, and wrote that he had then with him eighteen hundred men, and five hundred more were advancing from below. Here he received orders from General Washington to remain, till he should himself pass over with the Continental battalions, which would take place on the 29th, the men being too much fatigued to make the attempt sooner.

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and a deputy-adjutant-general, the whole amounting to about a thousand. I have been honored with your letter of the 23d, and its several enclosures, to which I shall pay due attention. A flag goes in this morning with a letter to General Howe, and another to General Lee. For the latter, Mr. Robert Morris has transmitted a bill of exchange, drawn by two British officers, for a hundred and sixteen pounds, nine shillings, and three pence, on Major Small, for money furnished them in South Carolina, which I trust will be paid. This supply is exclusive of the sum you have resolved to be sent to him, and which Mr. Morris will procure in time.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, Bucks County, 29 December, 1776.

SIR,

I take the liberty of enclosing a letter for General Lee, which I must beg the favor of you to have forwarded, as early as possible, as it contains a draft on Major Small for a sum of money, of which I fear the General will be in want.

A division of prisoners of the seventh regiment, with Captain Newmarsh, crossed the river at Easton, and went in without Mr. Moylan's knowledge. From the irregularity of the officer, who conducted them, and who did not make me a return of their names and rank, I am ignorant of both. I shall therefore be much obliged if you will order Mr. Loring* to furnish me with a proper list of them, that I may make a demand of the like number in exchange.† I am, Sir, &c.

* Joshua Loring, commissary-general of British prisoners.

† See APPENDIX, No. X.

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TO THE OFFICER COMMANDING AT MORRISTOWN.

Head-Quarters, Trenton, 30 December, 1776.

SIR,

I have the pleasure to acquaint you, that the Continental regiments from the eastern governments have agreed to stay six weeks beyond their term of enlistment, which was to have expired the last day of this month. For this extraordinary mark of their attachment to their country, I have agreed to give them a bounty of ten dollars per man, besides their pay running on. I hope this noble example will be followed by the four regiments under your command. Promise them the same reward, and endeavour to work upon them by every means in your power. Let them know the militia are pouring in from all quarters, and only want veteran troops to lead them on. Since our success at this place, on the 26th, the enemy have evacuated all the country below; they went off in the greatest hurry and confusion. I beg you will collect all the men you possibly can about Chatham, and, after gaining the proper intelligence, endeavour to strike a stroke upon Elizabethtown or that neighbourhood; at any rate, be ready to coöperate with me. Let me hear what success you have with your troops as soon as possible.

I am, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Trenton, 1 January, 1777.

SIR,

Your resolves of the 27th ultimo were transmitted to me last night by Messrs. Clymer, Morris, and Walton.*

* When the Congress assembled in Baltimore, they appointed these

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The confidence, which Congress have honored me with by these proceedings, has a claim to my warmest acknowledgments. At the same time I beg leave to assure them, that all my faculties shall be employed to direct properly the powers they have been pleased to vest me with, and to advance those objects, and only those, which gave rise to this honorable mark of distinction. If my exertions should not be attended with the desired success, I trust the failure will be imputed to the true cause, the peculiarly distressed situation of our affairs, and the difficulties I have to combat, rather than to a want of zeal for my country, and the closest attention to her interest, to promote which has ever been my study.*

On Monday morning I passed the Delaware myself; the whole of our troops and artillery not till yesterday, owing to the ice, which rendered their passage extremely difficult and fatiguing. Since their arrival, we have been parading the regiments whose term of service is now expired, in order to know what force we should have to depend on, and how to regulate our views accordingly. After much persuasion, and the exertions of their officers, half or a greater proportion of those from the eastward have consented to stay six weeks on a bounty of ten dollars. I feel the inconvenience of this advance, and I know the consequences which will result from it; but what could be done? Pennsylvania had allowed the same to her militia; the troops felt their importance, and would have their price. Indeed, as

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gentlemen a committee to remain in Philadelphia, with powers to transact such Continental business as required attention in that city. The correspondence between the Congress and General Washington passed through their hands.

* The resolves here mentioned, investing General Washington with extraordinary powers, are contained in the Appendix, No. XI.

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their aid is so essential, and not to be dispensed with, it is to be wondered at, that they had not estimated it at a higher rate. I perceive that Congress, apprehensive of this event, had made unlimited provision for it.

General Mifflin is at Bordentown with about eighteen hundred men, and General Cadwalader at Crosswicks with about the same number. We are now making our arrangements, and concerting a plan of operations, which I shall attempt to execute as soon as possible, and which I hope will be attended with some success. As to the number and situation of the enemy, I cannot obtain certain intelligence; but, from the accounts most to be relied on, they have collected the principal part of their force, from Brunswic and the neighbouring posts, at Princeton, where they are throwing up some works. The number there is reported to be from five to six thousand; and it is confidently said they have sent the chief part of their baggage to Brunswic. It is added, that General Howe landed at Amboy a day or two ago with a thousand light troops, and is on his march from thence.

I have sent into different parts of Jersey men of influence to spirit up the militia, and I flatter myself that the many injuries they have received will induce some to give their aid. If what they have suffered does not rouse their resentment, they must not possess the common feelings of humanity. To oppression, ravage, and a deprivation of property, they have had the more mortifying circumstance of insult added; after being stripped of all they had without the least compensation, protections have been granted them for the free enjoyment of their effects.

I have the honor to be, with due respect, &c.

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TO ROBERT MORRIS, GEORGE CLYMER, AND GEORGE WALTON, A COMMITTEE OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Trenton, 1 January, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

The messenger delivered to me the two parcels of hard money, which I suppose will turn out agreeably to the list, not having had time to count it. The sum that is lodged at Ticonderoga shall be ordered down, provided the commander in the northern department finds no better use for it there, than I can make of it here.

The accounts you give me of the good effects, that are likely to flow from our success at Trenton, add not a little to the satisfaction I have felt on that occasion. You are pleased to pay me many personal compliments, as if the merit of that affair was due solely to me; but I assure you, the other general officers, who assisted me in the plan and execution, have full as good a right to your encomiums as myself. We are devising such measures, as I hope, if they succeed, will add as much or more to the distress of the enemy, than their defeat at Trenton, and I promise myself the greatest advantages from having engaged a number of the eastern troops to stay six weeks beyond their time of enlistment, upon giving a bounty of ten dollars. This I know is a most extravagant price, when compared with the time of service; but the example was set by the State of Pennsylvania, with respect to their militia, and I thought it no time to stand upon trifles, when a body of firm troops, inured to danger, was absolutely necessary to lead on the more raw and undisciplined. I shall know this day how many of Colonel Glover's regiment are willing to continue in the land service. I do not expect many will be prevailed upon to stay, and I will

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endeavour to procure the rest for the purpose of fitting out the frigates upon the best terms I can.

The future and proper disposition of the Hessian prisoners struck me in the same light in which you view it; for which reason I advised the Council of Safety to separate them from their officers, and canton them in the German counties. If proper pains are taken to convince them how preferable the situation of their countrymen, the inhabitants of those counties, is to theirs, I think they may be sent back in the spring so fraught with a love of liberty and property too, that they may create a disgust to the service among the remainder of the foreign troops, and widen that breach, which is already opened between them and the British.

Yours of the 31st of last month enclosed to me sundry resolves of Congress, by which I find they have done me the honor to entrust me with powers, in my military capacity, of the highest nature and almost unlimited in extent. Instead of thinking myself freed from all *civil* obligations, by this mark of their confidence, I shall constantly bear in mind, that as the sword was the last resort for the preservation of our liberties, so it ought to be the first thing laid aside, when those liberties are firmly established. I shall instantly set about making the most necessary reforms in the army; but it will not be in my power to make so great a progress, as if I had a little leisure time upon my hands. Mr. Morris has my sincere thanks for the advice and assistance he promises to give Commissary Wharton, and I beg he would remind him, that all his exertions will be necessary to support an army in this exhausted country.

I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Pluckemin, 5 January, 1777.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you, that, since the date of my last from Trenton, I have removed with the army under my command to this place. The difficulty of crossing the Delaware, on account of the ice, made our passage over it tedious, and gave the enemy an opportunity of drawing in their several cantonments, and assembling their whole force at Princeton. Their large pickets advanced towards Trenton, their great preparations, and some intelligence I had received, added to their knowledge, that the 1st of January brought on a dissolution of the best part of our army, gave me the strongest reasons to conclude, that an attack upon us was meditating.

Our situation was most critical, and our force small. To remove immediately was again destroying every dawn of hope, which had begun to revive in the breasts of the Jersey militia; and to bring those troops, who had first crossed the Delaware and were lying at Crosswicks under General Cadwalader, and those under General Mifflin at Bordentown, (amounting in the whole to about three thousand six hundred) to Trenton, was to bring them to an exposed place. One or the other, however, was unavoidable. The latter was preferred, and they were ordered to join us at Trenton, which they did, by a night-march, on the 1st instant. On the 2d, according to my expectation, the enemy began to advance upon us; and, after some skirmishing, the head of their column reached Trenton about four o'clock, whilst their rear was as far back as Maidenhead. They attempted to pass Assanpink Creek, which runs through Trenton, at different places; but, finding the fords

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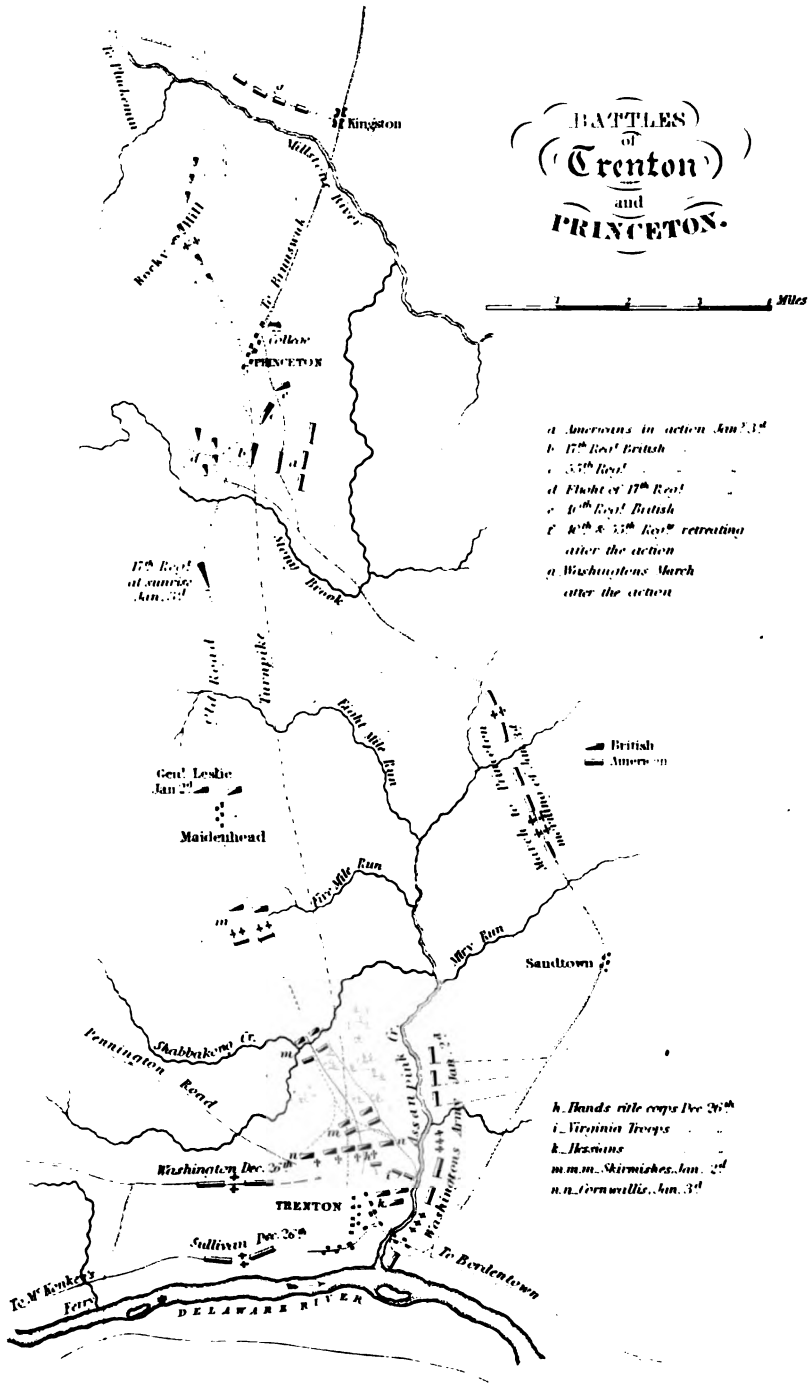

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guarded, they halted, and kindled their fires. We were drawn up on the other side of the creek. In this situation we remained till dark, cannonading the enemy, and receiving the fire of their field-pieces, which did us but little damage.

Having by this time discovered, that the enemy were greatly superior in number, and that their design was to surround us, I ordered all our baggage to be removed silently to Burlington soon after dark; and at twelve o'clock, after renewing our fires, and leaving guards at the bridge in Trenton, and other passes on the same stream above, marched by a roundabout road to Princeton, where I knew they could not have much force left, and might have stores. One thing I was certain of, that it would avoid the appearance of a retreat (which was of consequence, or to run the hazard of the whole army being cut off), whilst we might by a fortunate stroke withdraw General Howe from Trenton, and give some reputation to our arms. Happily we succeeded. We found Princeton about sunrise, with only three regiments and three troops of light-horse in it, two of which were on their march to Trenton. These three regiments, especially the two first, made a gallant resistance, and, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, must have lost five hundred men; upwards of one hundred of them were left dead on the field; and, with what I have with me and what were taken in the pursuit and carried across the Delaware, there are near three hundred prisoners, fourteen of whom are officers, all British.

This piece of good fortune is counterbalanced by the loss of the brave and worthy General Mercer, Colonels Hazlet and Potter, Captain Neal of the artillery, Captain Fleming, who commanded the first Virginian regiment, and four or five other valuable officers, who, with

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about twenty-five or thirty privates, were slain in the field.* Our whole loss cannot be ascertained, as many, who were in pursuit of the enemy (who were chased three or four miles), are not yet come in. The rear of the enemy's army lying at Maidenhead, not more than five or six miles from Princeton, was up with us before our pursuit was over; but, as I had the precaution to destroy the bridge over Stony Brook, about half a mile from the field of action, they were so long retarded there, as to give us time to move off in good order for this place. We took two brass field-pieces; but, for want of horses, could not bring them away. We also took some blankets, shoes, and a few other trifling articles, burned the hay, and destroyed such other things, as the shortness of the time would admit.

* Two days afterwards General Washington wrote to the President of Congress;—"I am happy to inform you, that the account of General Mercer's death, transmitted in my last, was premature, though it was mentioned as certain by many, who saw him after he was wounded. By intelligence from Princeton yesterday evening he was alive, and seemed as if he would do well. Unhappily he is a prisoner. Had it not been for the information I had of his death, I would have tried to bring him away, though I believe it could not have been effected."

He died on the 12th at Princeton, where he was buried; but his remains were subsequently removed to Philadelphia, and interred with military honors.

General Mercer was a native of Scotland, where he had been educated a physician. He was at the memorable battle of Culloden, in the capacity of a surgeon's mate. Having emigrated to America, he joined the army and was engaged in the expedition to Kittaning under Colonel Armstrong. His acquaintance with Washington commenced in the French war, and as, at the close of the war, he settled in Fredericksburg, the residence of Washington's mother and sister, an intimacy was always kept up between them. No man entered into the cause of the revolution with purer motives, or a nobler spirit, than General Mercer. On the 8th of April, 1777, Congress, as a tribute of gratitude, and of respect for his worth, resolved that a monument should be erected to his memory in Fredericksburg, and that his youngest son should from that time be educated at the expense of the United States. The latter clause of this resolve was carried into effect, but the pledge of a monument remains yet to be redeemed by the justice of the nation.

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My original plan, when I set out from Trenton, was, to push on to Brunswic; but the harassed state of our troops, many of them having had no rest for two nights and a day, and the danger of losing the advantage we had gained by aiming at too much, induced me, by the advice of my officers, to relinquish the attempt. But, in my judgment, six or eight hundred fresh troops upon a forced march would have destroyed all their stores and magazines, taken (as we have since learned) their military chest, containing seventy thousand pounds, and put an end to the war. The enemy, from the best intelligence I have been able to get, were so much alarmed at the apprehension of this, that they marched immediately to Brunswic without halting, except at the bridges (for I also took up those on Millstone, on the different routes to Brunswic), and got there before day.

From the best information I have received, General Howe has left no men either at Trenton or Princeton. The truth of this I am endeavouring to ascertain, that I may regulate my movements accordingly. The militia are taking spirits, and, I am told, are coming in fast from this State; but I fear those from Philadelphia will scarcely submit to the hardships of a winter campaign much longer, especially as they very unluckily sent their blankets with their baggage to Burlington. I must do them the justice however to add, that they have undergone more fatigue and hardship, than I expected militia, especially citizens, would have done at this inclement season. I am just moving to Morristown, where I shall endeavour to put them under the best cover I can. Hitherto we have been without any; and many of our poor soldiers quite barefoot, and ill clad in other respects. I have the honor to be, &c.*

* In both the actions at Trenton and Princeton, General Washington encouraged the troops by his presence in the most exposed situations.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

Pluckemin, 5 January, 1777.

DEAR GENERAL,

Fortune has favored us in an attack on Princeton. General Howe advanced upon Trenton, which we evacuated in the evening of the 2d of this instant, and drew up the troops on the south side of Mill Creek, and continued in that position until dark, then marched for Princeton, which we reached next morning by about nine o'clock. Three regiments of British troops were quartered there, which we attacked and routed. The number of the killed, wounded, and prisoners amounts to about five or six hundred. We lost several officers and about thirty privates. General Mercer is badly wounded, if not mortally. After the action we immediately marched for this place. I shall remove from hence to Morristown, and shall wait there a few days and refresh the troops, during which time I shall keep a strict watch upon the enemy's motions. They appear to be panic-struck, and I am in some hopes of driving them out of the Jerseys. It is thought advisable for you to march the troops under your command to Crosswicks, and keep a strict watch upon the enemy in that quarter. If the enemy continue at Brunswic, you must act with great circumspection, lest you meet with a surprise. As we have made two successful attacks upon them by surprise, if there is any possibility of retaliating, they will attempt it. You will give out your

An officer, who was in these engagements, wrote from Morristown on the 7th of January; — "Our army love their General very much, but they have one thing against him; which is the little care he takes of himself in any action. His personal bravery, and the desire he has of animating his troops by example, make him fearless of danger. This occasions us much uneasiness. But Heaven, which has hitherto been his shield, I hope will still continue to guard so valuable a life."

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strength to be twice as great as it is. Forward on all the baggage and scattered troops belonging to this division of the army, as soon as may be.

You will keep as many spies out as you shall see proper. A number of horsemen, in the dress of the country, must be constantly kept going backwards and forwards for this purpose, and if you discover any motion of the enemy, which you can depend upon, and which you think of consequence, let me be informed thereof as soon as possible by express.

I am, dear General, yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Pluckemin, 5 January, 1777.

SIR,

The enemy are in great consternation; and as the panic affords us a favorable opportunity to drive them out of the Jerseys, it has been determined in council, that you should move down towards New York with a considerable force, as if you had a design upon the city. That being an object of great importance, the enemy will be reduced to the necessity of withdrawing a considerable part of their force from the Jerseys, if not the whole, to secure the city. I shall draw the force on this side of the North River together at Morristown, where I shall watch the motions of the enemy, and avail myself of every favorable circumstance. You will retain for the expedition four thousand of the militia coming on from the New England governments. You will act with great precaution, but avail yourself of every favorable opportunity of attacking the enemy, when you can do it to advantage. General Lincoln must cross the North River and come on with the remainder of the

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militia to Morristown. Leave a sufficient guard at the Highlands. You will also have so many boats collected together, or in such a manner, that you may always avail yourself of them, if it be found expedient for your troops, or any part of them, to cross the North River at Dobbs's Ferry, or at any other of the landings.

I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 7 January, 1777.

SIR,

The enemy have totally evacuated Trenton and Princeton, and are now at Brunswic and the several posts on the communication between that and Hudson's River, but chiefly at Brunswic. Their numbers and movements are variously reported, but all agree that their force is great. There have been two or three little skirmishes between their parties and some detachments of the militia, in which the latter have been successful and made a few prisoners. The most considerable was on Sunday morning, when eight or ten Waldeckers were killed and wounded, and the remainder of the party, thirty-nine or forty, made prisoners, with two officers, by a force not superior in number and without receiving the least damage.

The severity of the season has made our troops, especially the militia, extremely impatient, and has reduced the number very considerably. Every day more or less leave us. Their complaints, and the great fatigue they have undergone, induced me to come to this place, as the best calculated, of any in this quarter, to accommodate and refresh them. The situation is by no means favorable to our views, and as soon as the pur-

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poses are answered for which we came, I think to remove, though I confess I do not know how we shall procure covering for our men elsewhere. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Morristown, 7 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you on the 5th from Pluckemin. A copy of the letter I enclose, lest the original should have miscarried. I confirm all the orders there given, only that I would, if it is agreeable to you both, have General Lincoln continue with you, and let some other proper officer conduct the troops, who are to cross the river and join me. But this I leave entirely to yourselves. I beg you will keep up every appearance of falling down upon New York, as that will be the surest method of obliging the enemy to withdraw their whole force from this side to protect the city; and, as I am confident they have not proper magazines established there, they must be put to extreme want for provisions. If they throw part of their force into New York, they will leave themselves in such a situation, that we may in all probability fall upon them with success.

I received yours of the 4th last night, and am glad to find, that you have already made some dispositions to move towards New York. Your following, with a stronger force, will give a color to our pretended or real design upon that city; for, if there is a fair opening, I would have you make the attempt. By a person, who came out of New York a few days ago, I am informed, that there are two thousand Hessians at Fort Washington and one brigade of British, and two regiments of Hessians in the city. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

Morristown, 7 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I am glad to hear by yours of the 4th instant, that you had arrived at Peekskill, and I hope from the measures you have taken to hasten up your troops, that they will soon be all with you. General Heath will communicate mine of this date to you, by which you will find, that the greater part of your troops are to move down towards New York, to draw the attention of the enemy to that quarter, and if they do not throw a considerable body back again, you may in all probability carry the city, or at least blockade them in it. I believe they are not prepared for the latter; for, as they have for some time past made themselves sure of holding Jersey, they have not taken proper precautions to establish large magazines at any one place. I leave it entirely to the determination of you and General Heath, whether you shall continue on the east side of Hudson's River, or come on with the troops that are to join me. I have only to beg of you to be as expeditious as possible in moving forward, for the sooner a panic-struck enemy is followed, the better. If we can oblige them to evacuate Jersey, we must drive them to the utmost distress; for, as I mentioned above, they have depended upon the supplies from that State for their winter support.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL EDWARD ANTILL.

Morristown, 8 January, 1777.

SIR,

I received yours of the 2d instant from Baltimore; in answer to which, I have only to desire you to call

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American
British
Ramapo
Ringwood
Tappan
Paramus
Clester
Nov. 18
Hackensack
Fort Lee
Green Pond
Pompton
Preakness
Totawa
Plains
Aquackanoc
Mt. Pleasant
Percipany
Whippany
Plains
Hanover
Orange
Passaic R.
Hoboken
Paulus Hook
Bergen
NEWARK
Nov. 24
Newark Bay
Gen. Mercer
Suckasunny
MORRISTOWN
Encamp.t
Mendham
Chatham
Springfield
Connecticut Farms
Elizabethtown
Chester
Waltown
Baskingridge
STATEN I.
Westfield
Scotch Plains
Rahway
Richmond
Pluckamin
Plainfield
Middlebrook
Boundbrook
Sampstown
Woodbridge
Encamp.t
Quibble T.
Perth Amboy
Matouchin
Bonham I.
Piscataway
RARITON BAY
Rariton River
British June 18
NEW BRUNSWICK
South Amboy
Somerset C.H.
Middletown
Flemington
Spotswood
Kingston
Ringoes T.
March of Americans
English Town
Battle June 28
Monmouth
Princeton
Battle Jan. 3d
Cranberry
Pennington
Maidenhead
March of British
Assanpink Cr.
Washington's Army Dec. 1776
Sandtown
Imlay's Town
Battle
Allen Town
TRENTON
Newtown
Crosswicks
Bordentown
MILITARY
Movements
in
NEW JERSEY.

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upon all your officers, who are upon recruiting service, to exert themselves as much as possible in filling their companies, and sending their recruits forward to some general place of rendezvous, that they may be armed, equipped, and got into service with as much expedition as possible. As you and Colonel Hazen had the nomination of your own officers, by virtue of your commissions, I shall have no objection to any gentleman of good character, whom you may think fit to appoint. I would only mention to you, that Mr. Burwell has already got a company in the Virginia artillery, and therefore you had better fill up the place you intended for him with some other person. If going to Virginia yourself will be of any service, I certainly shall have no objection to it.*

I am, Sir, yours, &c.

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* Edward Antill was lieutenant-colonel of the regiment commanded by Colonel Hazen. The origin and condition of this regiment were different from those of any others in the army. As soon as Congress were made acquainted with the disastrous issue of the attack on Quebec, they authorized the raising of an additional regiment of Canadians in that province, and appointed Hazen to be the colonel and Antill the lieutenant-colonel. This was the second Canadian regiment, as one had already been established under Colonel James Livingston. The regiment commanded by Hazen went by the name of *Congress's Own*, because it was not attached to the quota of any of the States. It was to consist of one thousand men, who were to be enlisted for the war, and, on account of the great distance from Congress, and to promote despatch, the appointment of the officers was entrusted to the colonel, with the approbation of the commanding officer in Canada. The regiment was to be arranged in four battalions, divided into five companies each. During the spring of 1776, about five hundred men were raised, who were on service in different parts of the province; but, on the evacuation of Canada, the number had decreased, and when the regiment arrived in Albany, during the month of August, it was reduced to less than one hundred. Hazen and Antill proceeded to Philadelphia to lay the state of their regiment before Congress; and, after the resolve was passed for establishing the new army of eighty-eight battalions, to be assigned in due proportions to the several States, it was decided that Hazen's regiment should continue on its original foundation; that is, the men to serve during the war, and the colonels to be empowered to appoint the subordinate officers. As the regiment belonged to no State,

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TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL EARL CORNWALLIS.

Morristown, 8 January, 1777.

MY LORD,

Your Lordship's letter of yesterday was delivered to me by the officer, who met your flag of truce. You may be assured, that no molestation will be offered to the convoy of money and stores, which General De Heister means to send to the Hessians taken at Trenton, nor to the surgeon with medicines for the wounded at Princeton, by any part of the regular army under my command. But I cannot answer for the militia, who are resorting to arms in most parts of this State, and who are exceedingly exasperated at the treatment they have met with, from both Hessian and British troops. I have therefore thought it most advisable to direct Captain Barry, the bearer of this, to give a safe conduct to the Hessian baggage as far as Philadelphia, and to the surgeon and medicines to Princeton. I have no objection to the Hessian sergeant and twelve men attending their baggage, till it is delivered to their countrymen; but I cannot consent to their carrying their arms, as I think none but bad consequences can ensue from such a measure.

I am, with due respect, my Lord, your Lordship's most obedient servant.

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the officers were authorized to raise their men in any or all of the States. To hasten the enlistments, it was agreed, that Colonel Hazen should superintend the recruiting service in New York and the eastern States, and Lieutenant-Colonel Antill in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. But when Colonel Hazen reached Albany, he found that the eastern States were giving so much larger bounties for filling up their quotas of the eighty-eight battalions, than he was authorized to allow by Congress, that his prospect of success was small. Owing to this circumstance the recruits for the regiment chiefly consisted of men from the middle States. — *Journals of Congress, January 20th, and October 23d*, 1776. Antill's *MS. Letter, January 2d*, 1777.

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TO COLONEL GEORGE BAYLOR.

Morristown, 9 January, 1777.

DEAR BAYLOR,

Your letter of the 1st from Baltimore came to my hands this day. Your inclination to command a regiment of horse I cheerfully yield to, because it is the recommendation of Congress, your own wish, and my desire. As nothing contributes so much to the constitution of a good regiment, as a good corps of officers, and no method so likely to obtain these, as leaving the choice in a great measure to the gentleman, who is to reap the honors or share the disgrace arising from their behaviour, I shall vest you with the power of nominating the officers of your own regiment, except the field-officers and those of the troop commanded by General Lewis, whom I shall annex to your regiment, instead of Sheldon's, and reserve a lieutenancy in some troop for Starke. When I talk of giving you the nomination of the officers, I would have it understood, that I claim to myself a negative upon a part or the whole, if I have reason to suspect an improper choice.

I earnestly recommend to you to be circumspect in your choice of officers. Take none but gentlemen; let no local attachments influence you; do not suffer your good nature, when an application is made, to say yes, when you ought to say no; remember, that it is a public, not a private cause, that is to be injured or benefited by your choice; recollect, also, that no instance has yet happened of good or bad behaviour in a corps in our service, that has not originated with the officers. Do not take old men, nor yet fill your corps with boys, especially for captains. Colonel Landon Carter some time ago recommended a grandson of his to me. If he still inclines to serve, and a lieutenancy would satisfy

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him, make him the offer of it. I have written to Major Clough to accept the majority in your regiment. He is an experienced officer in the horse service, and a gentleman, as far as I have seen him. The lieutenant-colonel I have not yet absolutely fixed on, though I have a person in my eye. For further instructions I refer you to Mr. Harrison, who will furnish you with a copy of those given to Colonel Sheldon. One hundred and twenty dollars will be allowed you, as the average price of the horses. The money for these and your accoutrements you must call upon Congress for; and I have to entreat, that you will not delay a moment, that can be avoided, in preparing to take the field. You must be upon your mettle, for others are engaged in the same service, and will exert themselves to the utmost to outdo you. I am very sincerely yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Morristown, 9 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you lately, since which the enemy appear to be drawing their whole force to Brunswic, whether with a design to move towards Philadelphia, attack us, or secure themselves from the inconveniences of detached bodies, I know not; but as many valuable purposes may, I think, be answered, by your moving towards New York, I wish no time may be lost in doing it. I have good reasons to believe, that there are very few men left in the city of New York, or upon the Island; consequently a body of troops marched that way may possess themselves of the city, or occasion a reinforcement to be thrown in there, and in either case cannot fail of advancing our cause. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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TO COLONEL NATHANIEL GIST.

Instructions.

Whereas the honorable Continental Congress, by a resolve of the 27th ultimo, have appointed sixteen battalions more to be raised, in addition to eighty-eight voted in September last, and have authorized me to nominate and commission the officers for the same, know you, that I, reposing the utmost confidence in your abilities and attachment to the United States of America, by virtue of the power aforesaid, do constitute and appoint you a colonel of one of the said battalions, giving and granting you authority, by and with the advice of your other field-officers, to appoint officers under the rank of field-officers necessary for the same, nevertheless reserving to myself the right of ratifying or rejecting such appointments; and, as many good officers may have been overlooked in the new appointments by the committees of the several States assigned for the discharge of that business, it is my wish, that you give a preference to such of them, as you know to be deserving of notice. I do hereby require and enjoin you, forthwith to take measures for recruiting such battalion, in the most expeditious manner, to serve for the term of three years, or during the continuance of the war with Great Britain, and upon such pay, bounties, and allowances, as have been resolved on by Congress for the eighty-eight battalions aforesaid.

Given at Head-Quarters at Morristown, this 11th day of January, 1777.*

* These sixteen additional regiments were established on a different footing from the eighty-eight battalions, which were apportioned among the several States, the appointment of officers being referred to the States respectively according to the quota of each; whereas in the six-

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 12 January, 1777.

SIR,

I am honored with yours of the 6th, enclosing several resolves of Congress respecting an exchange to be proposed between General Lee and the Hessian field-officers taken at Trenton. Colonel Rahl died the day after the action; and we left one of the majors so ill of his wounds, that I am in doubt of his recovery. I can however make an offer of all that remain, in exchange for General Lee, except one whom you order to be proposed for Colonel Allen. If the offer is rejected by General Howe, I shall think myself then at liberty to remonstrate to him on his treatment of General Lee. If he will not exchange him, he should at least admit him to his parole, as we have ever done to their prisoners, who have fallen into our hands. I understand from undoubted authority, that they intend to try the General by a court-martial, as a deserter from their service, pretending that his resignation was never accepted. But I shall inform General Howe, that, if any such step is taken under so shallow and illegal a pretext, and their

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teen battalions, or regiments, the appointment of the officers was left to the Commander-in-chief, and he was empowered to raise the men in any or all of the United States. Colonel Gist was authorized to raise four companies of rangers, and instructed to proceed to the Cherokee or any other nation of Indians, and attempt to procure a number of warriors, not exceeding five hundred, who were to be supplied with arms, blankets, and other necessaries, and, instead of presents, to receive the same pay as the troops in the Continental service. I am not aware that any Indians were obtained. The colonels of ten regiments were appointed in January, and furnished with instructions similar to the above. Their names were Nathaniel Gist, John Patton, William Grayson, Thomas Hartley, Samuel B. Webb, David Henly, Ezekiel Cornell, Henry Sherburne, Alexander Scammell, Henry Jackson. The appointments to the other six regiments were made subsequently at different times.

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sentence should extend either to affect his life or liberty, they may depend upon the most severe and adequate retaliation upon our part.*

The enemy have made no move since my last. By every account, they begin to be distressed, particularly for forage, of which there is little or none remaining in the small circle they possess, except salt hay. By letters from General Heath, of the 9th, he was beginning to move down towards Kingsbridge with the troops from New England. This must add to the distress of the enemy, who will, by this measure, be deprived of the subsistence they formerly drew from Westchester and the counties to the northward of York Island.

TO LORD HOWE.

Head-Quarters, 13 January, 1777.

MY LORD,

I am sorry that I am under the disagreeable necessity of troubling your Lordship with a letter, almost wholly on the subject of the cruel treatment, which our

* Congress had instructed General Washington to propose five Hessian field-officers, lately taken at Trenton, in exchange for General Lee, and one for Colonel Ethan Allen. Reports were received, that General Lee was ill used, and Congress resolved, that, in case the British Commander would not consent to the proffered exchange, precisely the same treatment should be exercised towards these officers, as that practised upon General Lee; in short, that the law of retaliation should be carried into rigid effect. President Hancock wrote to Washington, on the 6th of January; —"General Lee's situation seems to be extremely dangerous and critical, and, from General Howe's behaviour to him, it is highly probable he will be brought to trial for desertion. General Lee, it is said by Mr. Eustace, his aid-de-camp, having addressed two letters to General Howe, received them both back again unopened, and enclosed under a cover directed to '*Lieutenant-Colonel Lee.*' I hope the flag, which Congress ordered to be sent to make inquiry into the manner in which he is treated, has been despatched, and a remonstrance in consequence of it, should your information on the subject have rendered that step necessary."

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officers and men, in the naval department, who are unhappy enough to fall into your hands, receive on board the prison-ships in the harbour of New York. Without descending to particulars, I shall ground my complaint upon the matter contained in the enclosed paper, which is an exact copy of an account of the usage of the prisoners, delivered to Congress by a Captain Gamble, lately a prisoner himself in New York. If this account be true, of which I have no reason to doubt, as Captain Gamble is said to be a man of veracity, I call upon your Lordship to say, whether any treatment of your officers and seamen has merited so severe a retaliation. I am bold to say, it has not. So far from it, that the officers and seamen, taken on board armed ships, have been treated with the greatest humanity, and not forced to enter on board any of our public or private vessels of war; and those, taken in the merchant service, have been immediately set at liberty.

From the opinion I have ever been taught to entertain of your Lordship's humanity, I will not suppose, that you are privy to proceedings of so cruel and unjustifiable a nature; and I hope, that, upon making the proper inquiry, you will have the matter so regulated, that the unhappy persons, whose lot is captivity, may not in future have the miseries of cold, disease, and famine added to their other misfortunes. You may call us rebels, and say that we deserve no better treatment; but, remember, my Lord, that, supposing us rebels, we still have feelings equally as keen and sensible as loyalists, and will, if forced to it, most assuredly retaliate upon those, upon whom we look as the unjust invaders of our rights, liberties, and properties. I should not have said thus much, but my injured countrymen have long called upon me to endeavour to obtain a redress of their grievances; and I should think myself as culpable

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as those, who inflict such severities upon them, were I to continue silent.

I enclose to your Lordship a list of the captain and crew of an armed boat belonging to Georgia, taken by a man-of-war, Captain Stanhope. There is a sufficient number of prisoners in Georgia, belonging to your navy, to make an exchange. If the measure meets your approbation, it will be very agreeable to both parties. I lately sent in Lieutenant Boger, who belonged to the Liverpool frigate. Captain Bellew of the same frigate took a Captain Burke, and sent him into New York for the express purpose of having him exchanged for Boger. I should therefore be glad to have Captain Burke sent out. There are two captains of merchantmen, by the names of Bell and Getshius, on board the Whitley prison-ship. If your Lordship will grant them their liberty on parole, I will engage to send two British masters in exchange for them. I am, &c.*

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 13 January, 1777.

SIR,

I am directed by Congress to propose an exchange of five of the Hessian field-officers, taken at Trenton, for Major-General Lee; or, if this proposal should not be accepted, to demand his liberty upon parole, within certain bounds, as has ever been granted to your officers in our custody. I am informed, from good authority, that your reason for keeping him hitherto in stricter confinement than usual is, that you do not look upon him in the light of a common prisoner of war, but as a

* See Lord Howe's answer in the APPENDIX, No. XII.

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deserter from the British service, as his resignation was never accepted, and that you intend to try him as such by a court-martial. I will not undertake to determine how far this doctrine may be justifiable among yourselves, but I must give you warning, that Major-General Lee is looked upon as an officer belonging to, and under the protection of, the United Independent States of America, and that any violence you may commit upon his life or liberty, will be severely retaliated upon the lives or liberties of the British officers, or those of their foreign allies, at present in our hands.*

I am sorry, that I am again under the necessity of remonstrating to you upon the treatment, which our prisoners continue to receive in New York. Those, who have lately been sent out, give the most shocking account of their barbarous usage, which their miserable, emaciated countenances confirm. How very different was their appearance from that of your soldiers, who have been lately returned to you, after a captivity of twelve months; and whether this difference in appearance was owing to a difference of treatment, I leave it to you, or any impartial person, to determine. I would

* The above statement, in regard to the character in which the British commander held General Lee, is confirmed by his correspondence with the minister. He wrote to Lord George Germain, on the 20th of December; — "General Lee, being considered in the light of a deserter, is kept a close prisoner; but I do not bring him to trial, as a doubt has arisen, whether, by a public resignation of his half-pay, prior to his entry into the rebel army, he is still amenable to the military law as a deserter; upon which point I shall wait for information; and if the decision should be for trial on this ground, I beg to have the judges' opinion to lay before the court. Deserters are excluded in my agreement with the enemy for exchange of prisoners."

To this the minister replied; — "As you have difficulties about bringing General Lee to trial in America, it is his Majesty's pleasure, that you send him to Great Britain by the first ship of war."

Sir William Howe wrote in answer to this order; — "Washington declines to exchange the Hessian field-officers, taken at Trenton, or Lieu-

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beg, that some certain rule of conduct towards prisoners may be settled; and, if you are determined to make captivity as distressing as possible, let me know it, that we may be upon equal terms, for your conduct must and shall regulate mine.

If a real scarcity of the articles of provision and fuel, at this inclement season, is the cause that our prisoners are debarred from them, common humanity points out a mode, which is, to suffer them to go home under parole, not to serve during the war, or until an equal number is released by us for them. Most of the prisoners, who have returned home, have informed me, that they were offered better treatment, provided they would enlist into your service. This, I believe, is unprecedented; and what, if true, makes it still more unnecessary for me to apologize for the freedom of expression, which I have used throughout this letter. But it would be criminal in me to be silent, were such abuses, when made known to me, left unrepresented by me.

I am, with due respect, Sir, &c. *

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tenant-Colonel Campbell, unless Lee is recognised as a prisoner of war, Lee is therefore detained for further instructions, being apprehensive, that the close confinement of the Hessian officers would be the consequence of sending Lee to Britain, and that this would occasion much discontent among the foreign troops." — *Letter, July 8th*, 1777.

This measure of caution was approved, and the minister replied; — "His Majesty consents that Lee (having been struck off the half-pay list) shall, though deserving the most exemplary punishment, be deemed as a prisoner of war, and may be exchanged as such, when you may think proper." — *Letter, September 3d.*

These extracts have been taken from the original manuscript letters.

* See Sir William Howe's answer to this letter in the APPENDIX, No. XIII.

By a despatch from Lord George Germain to Sir William Howe, dated January 14th, it would appear, that great expectations were at this time entertained from the supposed readiness of the people in America to rally round the royal standard, in opposition to the cause of Congress. Lord George Germain wrote; — "There is room to hope, that you will not find it difficult to embark whatever number of provincials you may think proper

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 18 January, 1777.

Dear Sir,

It is some time since I had the pleasure of writing to you, or receiving a letter from you. The weight of business, which has lain upon both our hands, has, I dare say, hindered us from writing letters, except when absolutely necessary. The enemy, by two lucky strokes at Trenton and Princeton, have been obliged to abandon every part of Jersey except Brunswic and Amboy, and the small tract of country between them, which is so entirely exhausted of supplies of every kind, that I hope, by preventing them from sending their foraging parties to any great distance, to reduce them to the utmost distress, in the course of this winter.

Colonel Dayton arrived from the northward a few days ago. He informs me, that the time of most of his regiment expires in February, but that they are extremely anxious to get down to this part of the country, where many of them have families and connexions, who they suppose must have suffered many hardships, as the enemy were for some time in possession of the country, and committed every kind of depredation upon the inhabitants. He thinks, if they were brought down here, before they are discharged, that most of them might be induced to enlist for the war, which would be a thing to be wished for, as I am told they are a fine body of men, and well acquainted with this country, which will in all probability be the scene of action next campaign. I

for particular parts of the service; in which expectation, cloth for three thousand additional suits, and camp-equipage for eight thousand, are ordered, and will be sent to you. And here I must afford you the satisfaction of knowing, that whatever degree of support the rebels may have been taught to expect from foreign powers, I have great reason to believe, that Dr. Franklin will not be able to procure them any open assistance."

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would not give Colonel Dayton any kind of promise to withdraw the regiment from Ticonderoga one day before their time expires, without consulting you, and I do it now, only for the reasons before mentioned.*

I shall be glad to hear from you upon the subject of garrisoning the forts upon the Lakes, against the next campaign, both as to the number of men and the time that they ought to be there. I should think, that the levies from Massachusetts and New Hampshire had better be ordered there, as it is more convenient for them than the troops of any other State to march to that quarter. I wish to be informed of the number and state of the public arms to the northward, as I suppose many of the disbanded troops left theirs behind them.

I am, dear Sir, with great regard, &c.

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* Colonel Dayton commanded a New Jersey regiment, with which he had been stationed during the year preceding on the westerly frontiers of New York, particularly at Fort Stanwix, or Fort Schuyler, as it was called after it was occupied by Colonel Dayton. Near the end of the year the regiment was ordered to Ticonderoga, where it was at this time stationed under Lieutenant-Colonel Barber. The service had borne heavily upon the troops, and they were impatient to return home. This will appear by a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Barber to Colonel Dayton, dated at Mount Independence, opposite to Ticonderoga. "We have now reached," he observes, "the 12th of February, but have made no advances towards New Jersey. What is yet worse, there is not the least prospect of our departure, notwithstanding our soldiers' times are expiring in thick succession. The time I long dreaded has come, when the virtue of our men is tried in such delicate circumstances, they being detained on this ground after their times are out, their native province and friends suffering by the depredations of the enemy, and a most poisonous example set them here by regiments quitting the ground immediately on the expiration of their enlistments. As yet they are quiet, but I fear I shall have much trouble with them before we are relieved. I have written to General Schuyler, according to your directions, and received his answer requesting my exertions to detain the men until troops can arrive sufficient to garrison this post. We have now the dull prospect of lingering out perhaps two months longer in the disagreeable state of a separation of soul and body; for you must certainly suppose our hearts are in New Jersey though our bodies are on Mount Independence. The men think very

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Morristown, 19 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

By this time you must have discovered what effect your movement towards New York has occasioned. If the city, on the one hand, is not left so destitute of troops, as to afford you an easy conquest of it, nor so strengthened, on the other, as to leave the enemy weak in New Jersey, the end of your expedition is not answered, and the junction of your troops with these under my command, after leaving sufficient guards at the forts and passes of the Highlands, becomes indispensably necessary. I have therefore to desire, that you will be preparing boats at some convenient place for crossing the North River, in order that no time may be lost, if it should become, as I believe it shortly will, absolutely necessary for a junction of the forces. I cannot in this place assign to you my reasons for this opinion, but I request, if your prospects are not such as I hoped for on that side, that you will prepare for a removal, and pay strict and diligent obedience to the order when you receive it, as much may depend on despatch. In the mean time, continue to procure and give me every possible information of the enemy's strength and situation. I am, Sir, yours, &c. *

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hard of their fate; they repeat your promises; they mention the circumstances of their State, friends, and property; arguments which cause me a difficulty to answer."

* This expedition under General Heath towards New York was unsuccessful. The troops, who were wholly militia, marched in three divisions. One, commanded by General Lincoln, proceeded down the road by the North River; General Scott in the centre advanced by the way of White Plains; and Generals Wooster and Parsons from New Rochelle and East Chester. On the 18th, just before sunrise, the three divisions reached the enemy's outposts, in the neighbourhood of Kingsbridge, nearly at the same time. There was skirmishing, and a few prisoners were taken from

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TO THE COUNCIL OF SAFETY OF PENNSYLVANIA.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 19 January, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

The readiness, which the militia of Pennsylvania have shown by engaging in the service of their country, at an inclement season of the year, when my army was reduced to a handful of men, and our affairs were in the most critical situation, does great honor to them and to your State. But, although they have contributed greatly to the success, which has lately attended our arms, I must inform you, that with pain I hear they have determined to return home. Most of the city militia have resolved to stay some days longer; they must then be discharged, as I am well informed they are generally in want of almost every necessary. I must depend chiefly this winter on the militia, to enable me to act offensively, or even to make a stand; and therefore I sincerely wish they could have been prevailed upon to serve, till they might have been relieved by the troops now raising by the Continent.

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the enemy at Valentine's Hill. This small adventure was magnified into a great victory by the reports that went abroad, and when the state of facts became known, the reaction on the public mind caused the enterprise to be regarded with some degree of ridicule. It is true, that the result seemed insignificant when compared with so formidable an array of generals and troops; and it is also true, that General Heath summoned Fort Independence to surrender in a more lofty and peremptory tone than was expedient, unless he was prepared to execute his threat with an overwhelming force. His summons was closed with the following words. "Twenty minutes only can be allowed for the garrison to give their answer; and should it be in the negative, they must abide the consequences." The garrison returned no answer, and no consequences followed. The fort was not attacked, and General Heath retreated after maintaining his position for ten days very near the enemy's works. The expedition was well conducted on several accounts, but in respect to its main object it was a signal failure. The particulars may be found in General Heath's *Memoirs*, pp. 107–113.

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There is now the fairest opportunity of totally destroying the British army, or at least of delaying their operations in the spring, till we may be prepared to oppose them by regular forces. As it is a matter of the highest importance, that your militia should be put on such a footing, as will fully answer the exigency of our affairs at this time, I do most earnestly recommend, that such spirited and effectual measures be adopted as will soonest accomplish this great and necessary work. As there is not the least doubt at present, that the principal object of the enemy is to get possession of the city of Philadelphia, it is absolutely necessary, that every person able to bear arms, except such as are conscientiously scrupulous against it in every case, should give their personal service, and, whenever a part of the militia is required only, either to join the army, or find a man in their place. In order to effect this, I beg you will order the whole militia of your State to be enrolled and completely equipped, that one half at least may proceed to join the army with all possible expedition. Let those, who have done their tour of duty already, be excused; but those, who have not, should be obliged to come forth, or hire a proper person in their place, to remain till the 1st of April, unless sooner discharged by the Commander-in-chief. You may be assured, that nothing but the united efforts of every State in America can save us from disgrace and too probably from ruin. The army is much reduced since we left Trenton; and the many that will be discharged in a few days will so weaken our force, that it will be impossible to oppose the enemy with success, should they advance towards us; or do any essential service, if they should move towards Philadelphia. As I cannot expect our situation can long be a secret to the enemy, there is no doubt, but they will avail themselves of it, and take

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advantage of our weakness. When any of your militia are coming forward, I beg you will inform them, that the time, for which they engage to serve, is to begin when they join the army. The want of a regular, well-established government in your State has greatly obstructed the public service. I therefore recommend, that some authority be immediately exerted to draw forth your whole strength. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 19 January, 1777.

SIR,

The fluctuating state of an army composed chiefly of militia bids fair to reduce us to the situation, in which we were some little time ago; that is, of scarce having any army at all, except reinforcements speedily arrive. One of the battalions from the city of Philadelphia goes home to-day, and the other two only remain a few days longer by courtesy. The time for which a county brigade under General Mifflin came out is expired, and they stay from day to day by dint of solicitation, their numbers much reduced by desertions. We have about eight hundred of the eastern Continental troops remaining, of twelve or fourteen hundred who at first agreed to stay; part engaged to the last of this month, and part to the middle of next. The five Virginia regiments are reduced to a handful of men, as are Colonel Hand's, Smallwood's, and the German battalion. A few days ago General Warner arrived with about seven hundred Massachusetts militia engaged to the 15th of March.

Thus you have a sketch of our present army, with which we are obliged to keep up appearances before an enemy already double in numbers, and who from

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every account are withdrawing their troops from Rhode Island, to form a junction of their whole army, and make another attempt either to break up ours, or penetrate towards Philadelphia; a thing by no means difficult now, as the ice affords an easy passage over the Delaware. I do not yet know what effect General Heath's moving down towards New York will have. Yesterday morning a considerable firing was heard, which seemed to be about Kingsbridge. I am in hopes, that his appearance in that quarter with a pretty large force will oblige them to withdraw part of theirs from Jersey, to secure the city of New York, which, by late accounts, is weakly garrisoned. General Heath has all the eastern and New York militia with him, except the small brigade under General Warner, that I mentioned before, one regiment of Connecticut, stopped at Providence in Rhode Island, and a number, how many I do not know, requested by General Schuyler to be sent to Ticonderoga. If it should appear, that they are regardless of the diversion made by General Heath, and persist in their plan of drawing their whole army together in Jersey, I must order him over with all his troops, except as many as are necessary to garrison the forts and guard the passes in the Highlands.

I have ordered away every officer, that could be spared, some to recruit, and some to collect the scattered men of the different regiments, who are dispersed almost over the continent; for, of the vast numbers sent to the hospitals at different times, few ever returned after they got well. As militia must be our dependence till we can get the new army raised and properly arranged, I must entreat you to continue your endeavours with the States of Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia to turn out every man they possibly can, and for some time longer than they have generally stipulated for. If

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they agree for a month or any limited time, it should commence from the time they actually join the army, and not from the time they leave their homes; otherwise the marching backwards and forwards consumes the term of engagement. I think these demands of aid should be made as quietly as the nature of the case will admit, especially at this time when we are deceiving our enemies with false opinions of our numbers; for, to boast of our superiority in that respect on one hand, and to call publicly on the people for assistance on the other, is an impropriety too glaring; indeed, it has been already noticed in some publications that I have seen from New York. I have the honor to be, &c,

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TO GOVERNOR COOKE.

Morristown, 20 January, 1777.

SIR,

I am exceedingly sorry to hear, that your State has ordered several battalions to be raised for the defence of the State only, and this before proper measures are taken to fill the Continental regiments. You cannot be insensible how unequal any one State is, unconnected with the others, to defend itself, if the enemy makes a descent against it with any considerable part of their force. Neither have you the least reason to think, that you would derive less protection from the troops, if they were raised upon the Continent's account, than on that of the State. If each State were to prepare for its own defence, independent of each other, they would all be soon conquered, one by one. Our success must depend upon a firm union and a strict adherence to the general plan. Other measures may produce a partial relief, but never can remove the principal evil.

You must be sensible, that the season is fast ap-

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proaching, when a new campaign will open; nay, the former is not yet closed, nor do I intend it shall be, unless the enemy quits the Jerseys. It is of the last importance to the interest of America, that the new regiments be speedily levied. It would give me an opportunity in the fore part of the campaign, before the enemy can collect their force, or receive any reinforcement from home, to give them a fatal blow, which might terminate the campaign to great advantage. I am sure, that the necessity of having the Continental regiments immediately completed is too obvious to need any further arguments. I hope the powers of government are such, as to complete the new levies by draft, if they cannot be filled seasonably by voluntary enlistments. Necessity obliges me to call upon you, as I shall upon every other State, in the most pressing terms, to complete, without delay, your proportion of the eighty-eight battalions. I am confident, that the raising of the two regiments at the expense of the State, before the Continental regiments are complete, can answer no valuable purpose. If the enemy make a descent upon Rhode Island with any considerable force, the opposition of two regiments will be inconsiderable. If they only infest the coast with their ships, the militia would answer a much better purpose, and at a far less expense. I must confess, that I am ignorant of the reasons, which induced the Assembly to adopt the measure; neither can I conceive of the use and policy of the scheme. I wish it may not be productive of more injury than benefit, by introducing innovations and changes, that must retard the filling of the Continental regiments, and, consequently, prejudice the general interest, which every State must have an eye to; and the obligation on you is stronger than on any one else, being the most exposed and the least capable of making a separate defence.

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Our affairs here are in a very prosperous train. Within a month past, in several engagements with the enemy, we have killed, wounded, and taken prisoners between two and three thousand men. I am very confident, that the enemy's loss here will oblige them to recall their force from your State. If I am properly supported, I shall hope to close the campaign gloriously for America. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 20 January, 1777.

SIR,

I take the liberty to propose the establishment of an officer to reside at New York, under parole to transmit no intelligence but what belongs to his office; whose business it shall be, to provide necessaries for such prisoners as fall into your hands. Perhaps the establishment of such an officer, with proper credits, may put a stop to the many complaints, which I am daily under the necessity of hearing; some of them, probably, without foundation, and others from the want of many things, which you are not obliged to furnish the prisoners. The gentleman, whom I would beg leave to recommend as a proper agent, is Mr. Lewis Pintard, the bearer, a person well known in New York, and of long-established reputation as a considerable merchant.* The Council of Safety of Pennsylvania have desired liberty, when the weather permits, of sending a vessel, under a flag, with a supply of meat and flour for our prisoners in New York. I should be glad to be favored with your answer, and am, with due respect, Sir, &c.

* This proposition was made conformably to a resolve of Congress, by which General Washington was likewise empowered to appoint the agent.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL DICKINSON.

Head-Quarters, 21 January, 1777.

SIR,

General Putnam communicated to me last night the disagreeable account, that Lieutenant-Colonel Preston's party of militia from Cumberland county in this State has deserted him. This practice in the militia so generally prevails, that unless some effectual check can be speedily applied, I apprehend the most fatal consequences. The mischief is not confined to the desertion alone. They stay till they are properly equipped to render essential service, and by that means plunder the public of the necessaries, that were at first otherwise intended, and would be better applied. Now I recommend to you, that you call immediately into service, by such ways as you think best, at least one third of all the militia of this State, making it generally known amongst them, that they must come prepared to stay till the 1st of April, unless sooner discharged by authority. It will occur to them, that nothing but their most vigorous exertion at this time will enable me to oppose any design of the enemy, and that therefore they ought to continue with me till relieved by the regular troops now raising. I mean, however, that every possible indulgence should be shown to those men, who have been in actual service, and were regularly discharged, and that no excuse shall be admitted for those, who have shamefully remained at home when their every thing was at stake.

I am, &c.*

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* *From the Orderly Book, January 21st.*—"The General is sorry to find, that the late general order, allowing the plunder taken from the enemy to be divided for the benefit of the captors, has been mistaken by some and abused by others. The indulgence was granted to the scouting parties *only*, as a reward for the extraordinary fatigue, hardship, and dan-

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 22 January, 1777.

SIR,

My last to you was on the 20th instant. Since that I have the pleasure to inform you, that General Dickinson, with about four hundred militia, has defeated a foraging party of the enemy of an equal number, and has taken forty wagons, and upwards of a hundred horses, most of them of the English draft breed, and a number of sheep and cattle, which they had collected. The enemy retreated with so much precipitation, that General Dickinson had only an opportunity of making nine prisoners. They were observed to carry off a good many dead and wounded in light wagons. This action happened near Somerset Court-House, on Millstone River. General Dickinson's behaviour reflects the highest honor upon him; for, though his troops were all raw, he led them through the river middle-

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ger they were exposed to upon those parties. The General never meant, nor had an idea that any of ours or the enemy's stores, found at any evacuated post, were to be considered the property of those, that first marched in. Neither did he mean, that any public stores discovered by any of the scouting parties should be appropriated to their use, unless they found the enemy in the actual possession, and dispossessed them. Plunder taken under such circumstances, either by the militia or the Continental troops, is to be reported by the commanding officer of the party to some of the Continental or Provincial generals, who are directed to have all the provisions and military stores so taken, appraised by the commissary and quartermaster general, or their deputies, and the party paid the value thereof. Such articles as are taken, not necessary for the use of the army, are to be sold at public vendue, under the direction of the quartermaster-general, or some of his deputies, for the benefit of the captors.

"The General prohibits, in both the militia and Continental troops, in the most positive terms, the infamous practice of plundering the inhabitants, under the specious pretence of their being Tories. Let the persons of such as are known to be enemies to their country be seized and confined, and their property disposed of as the law of the State directs. It is our

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deep, and gave the enemy so severe a charge, that, although supported by three field-pieces, they gave way and left their convoy.*

I have not heard from General Heath since the firing near Kingsbridge last Saturday; which I cannot account for, unless the North River should have been rendered impassable by the ice. I shall be glad to know what stock of small arms you at present have, and what are your expectations shortly. The necessity, that we have been and are now under, of calling in and arming the militia, scatters our armory all over the world, in a manner. Their officers are so irregular, that they generally suffer their men to carry home every thing that is put into their hands, which is for ever lost to the public. The new raised regiments will call for a great number of arms; and I do not at present see how they are to be supplied.

I would again beg leave to recall the attention of Congress to the appointment of general officers. I will not

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business to give protection and support to the poor, distressed inhabitants, not to multiply and increase their calamities. After the publication of this order, any officer, either militia or Continental, found attempting to conceal the public stores, plundering the inhabitants under the pretence of their being Tories, or selling at vendue plunder taken from the enemy, in any other manner than these orders direct, may expect to be punished in the severest manner, and be obliged to account for every thing so taken or sold. The adjutant-general is to furnish the commanding officer of each division with a copy of these orders, who is to circulate copies among his troops immediately."

* General Philemon Dickinson was the commander of the New Jersey militia, distinguished for his zeal in the cause of his country, and the very important services, which he rendered in his military capacity at different stages of the war; and afterwards as a senator of the United States.

When the main army took up their quarters at Morristown, after the battle of Princeton, General Dickinson was stationed on the west side of Millstone River, one of the nearest posts to Brunswic, then in possession of the enemy. On the opposite side of the river was a mill, in which was deposited a large quantity of flour. Tempted by such a booty, Lord Corn-

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suppose the nomination of them is postponed upon a saving principle, because the advantage in having proper officers to examine the pay-rolls of their several regiments, and compare them with the returns of their brigades, to see that the regiments are provided with what is proper, and that no more than a sufficiency is allowed, to keep officers to their duty, and not, while the spirited officer is encountering all the fatigues and hardships of a rigorous campaign, suffer a number of others, under various frivolous pretences and imaginary sicknesses, to enjoy themselves at the public expense at their own firesides,—I say, if the appointments are withheld upon parsimonious principles, the Congress are mistaken; for I am convinced, that, by the correction of many abuses, which it is impossible for me to attend to, the public will be benefited in a great degree in the article of expense. But this is not all. We have very little time to do a very great work in. The arranging, providing for, and disciplining a hundred and odd battalions is not to be accomplished in a day; nor is it to be done at all with any degree of propriety, when we have once en-

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wallis sent out a party, with wagons and horses, to seize the flour and collect such forage as fell in their way. While engaged in this enterprise, General Dickinson fell upon them with his militia in a spirited manner, and gained the advantage above described.

He was brother to John Dickinson, author of the celebrated *Farmer's Letters*, and other able political writings in defence of his country's rights; but who thought the declaration of independence premature, and on that account was superseded as a delegate in Congress from the State of Pennsylvania. The following extract from a letter, written by him a few days afterwards, to Charles Thomson, Secretary of Congress, will show, that his patriotism was not less ardent, than that of his coadjutors, although he could not agree with them in opinion.

"I received a letter from General Washington yesterday, and had a very particular conversation with General Mercer. The enemy are removing, and an attack on New York is quickly expected. As for myself, I can form no idea of a more noble fate, than, after being the constant advocate for and promoter of every measure, that could possibly lead to

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tered upon the active part of the campaign. These duties must be branched out, or they will be neglected, and the public injured. Besides, were the brigadiers appointed, they might be facilitating the recruiting service; they would have time to get a little acquainted with their brigades and the wants of them, and ease me of the great weight and burden, which I at present feel.

On whom the choice will or ought to light, I cannot undertake to say. In a former letter I took the liberty of submitting to the consideration of Congress the propriety of appointing, out of each State, brigadiers to command the troops of that State, thinking, as a distinction is now fixed, a spirit of emulation might arise by this means. At any rate, I shall take the liberty of recommending General Cadwalader as one of the first for the new appointments. I have found him a man of ability, a good disciplinarian, firm in his principles, and of intrepid bravery. I shall also beg leave to recommend Colonel Reed to the command of the horse, as a person, in my opinion, every way qualified; for he is extremely active and enterprising; many signal proofs

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peace, or prevent its return from being barred up; after cheerfully and deliberately sacrificing my popularity and all the emoluments I might so certainly have derived from it to principles; after suffering all the indignities, that my countrymen now bearing rule are inclined, if they could, to shower down upon my innocent head, — willingly to resign my life, if Divine Providence shall please so to dispose of me, even for the defence and happiness of those unkind countrymen, whom I cannot forbear to esteem as fellow-citizens amidst their envy against me. However, I covet not the glory of such an exit from this stage of life. Where duty and honor require my presence, there I shall be; but much, much rather would I choose, that these severe masters would give me up to my dear connexions, my books, and my friends, an intercourse and employment for which my constitution is better formed, than for the toils of war, and to cultivate which my temper is more disposed, than to relish all the united glories, could I attain them, of every heroic death from the Roman Curtius to the British Wolfe." — *MS. Letter, dated Elizabethtown, August 10th*, 1776.

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of which he has given this campaign. For the rest, the members of Congress can judge better than I can. I can only say, that, as the army will probably be divided in the course of the next campaign, there ought, in my opinion, to be three lieutenant-generals, nine major-generals, and twenty-seven brigadiers; in other words, there ought, at least, to be a brigadier to every four regiments, and a major-general to every three brigades. The lieutenant-generals will, I presume, be appointed out of the oldest major-generals, and the major-generals from the oldest brigadiers. Nine brigadiers will then be to nominate.

I forgot before this to inform Congress, that, including the regiment of light dragoons from Virginia, and Colonel Sheldon's to be raised in Connecticut, I have only commissioned officers for four regiments. I was willing to try how these could be equipped before I put more officers into commission. It is apprehended we shall find difficulty in providing necessaries or even horses for these four regiments; if we should not, I shall immediately set about the residue. Colonel Baylor, Colonel Moylan (who, as volunteer, has remained constantly with the army since his discontinuance in the quarter-master's department), and Colonel Sheldon, command the three new regiments of light dragoons. The treasury has been for some time empty, and the army has labored under the greatest inconvenience for want of money. The recruiting service is particularly injured by this, as many officers are now waiting only for bounty-money. I have also complaints from the eastward of the want of money to carry on their recruiting service. If we are not supplied with that necessary article, all matters must be at a stand. I must therefore beg, that, if Mr. Palfrey has not been already supplied with a large sum, it may be done with the utmost ex-

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pedition, and that you will endeavour to keep up the supply by constantly sending on smaller parcels.

I am, &c.

P. S. I did not recollect Major-General Lincoln, in the provincial service of Massachusetts. He is an excellent officer, and worthy of your notice in the Continental line.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.*

Morristown, 24 January, 1777.

SIR,

The situation to which I am reduced for want of a regular body of troops, on whom I can depend for a length of time, makes it indispensably necessary for me to call upon you, and entreat you to exert yourself in levying and equipping the number of battalions allotted to your State by the resolutions of Congress in September last. You must be fully sensible of the hardship imposed upon individuals, and how detrimental it must be to the public, to have farmers and tradesmen frequently called into the field as militia-men; whereby a total stop is put to arts and agriculture, without which we cannot possibly long subsist. But great as this inconvenience is, we must put up with it, or submit to a greater, the total loss of our liberties, until our regular Continental army can be brought into the field. The above reasons alone, I hope, will be sufficient to induce you to exert yourself; for, if our new army is not ready to take the field early in the spring, we shall lose

* This letter was likewise sent as a circular to each of the New England States.

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all the advantages, which I may say we have providentially gained this winter. While our dependence is upon militia, we have a full army one day, and scarce any the next; and I am much afraid, that the enemy one day or other, taking advantage of one of these temporary weaknesses, will make themselves masters of our magazines of stores, arms, and artillery. Nothing but their ignorance of our numbers protects us at this very time, when, on the contrary, had we six or eight thousand regular troops, or could the militia, who were with me a few days ago, have been prevailed upon to stay, we could have struck such a stroke, as would have inevitably ruined the army of the enemy, in their divided state.

I am not without hopes, that by creating a powerful diversion on the side of New York, we may still keep their force divided between that province and this; if so, and a good body of regular troops could be furnished to my aid, before the roads will be in a condition for the enemy, with their reduced wagon and artillery horses, to move out, it may not perhaps be out of my power to strike a decisive blow before spring. This is another and a forcible reason to induce you to send your new levies forward with all expedition. While the men are raising, I beg you will spare no pains to make a collection of all things necessary for their equipment; not only with such as they can carry with them into the field, but for their use and convenience while they are there, such as spare shoes, stockings, and shirts; the want of which has been the ruin of the old army. If these articles are provided and put into the hands of the regimental quartermaster, they can always be delivered out when wanted, and stoppages made by the paymasters. I expect the clothier-general will be with the army in a few days, when I shall give him

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directions to allot a proportion of the clothing lately taken, and purchased for the public, to each State.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Morristown, 24 January, 1777.

SIR,

The irregular and disjointed state of the militia of this province makes it necessary for me to inform you, that, unless a law is immediately passed by your Legislature to reduce them to some order, and oblige them to turn out in a different manner from what they have hitherto done, we shall bring very few into the field, and even those few will render little or no service. Their officers are generally of the lowest class of the people; and, instead of setting a good example to their men, are leading them into every kind of mischief, one species of which is plundering the inhabitants, under the pretence of their being Tories. A law should, in my opinion, be passed, to put a stop to this kind of lawless rapine; for, unless there is something done to prevent it, the people will throw themselves, of choice, into the hands of the British troops. But your object should be a well-regulated militia law. The people, put under good officers, would behave in quite another manner, and not only render real service as soldiers, but would protect, instead of distressing, the inhabitants. What I would wish to have particularly insisted upon, in the new law, should be, that every man, capable of bearing arms, should be obliged to turn out, and not buy off his service by a trifling fine. I am, &c.

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GENERAL WASHINGTON'S PROCLAMATION.

Whereas several persons, inhabitants of the United States of America, influenced by inimical motives, intimidated by the threats of the enemy, or deluded by a Proclamation issued the 30th of November last, by Lord and General Howe, styled the King's Commissioners for granting pardons, &c. (now at open war, and invading these States), have been so lost to the interest and welfare of their country, as to repair to the enemy, sign a declaration of fidelity, and in some instances have been compelled to take the oath of allegiance, and engaged not to take up arms, or encourage others so to do, against the King of Great Britain; And whereas it has become necessary to distinguish between the friends of America and those of Great Britain, inhabitants of these States; and that every man who receives protection from, and as a subject of any State, not being conscientiously scrupulous against bearing arms, should stand ready to defend the same against hostile invasion; I do therefore, in behalf of the United States, by virtue of the powers committed to me by Congress, hereby strictly command and require every person, having subscribed such declaration, taken such oath, and accepted such protection and certificate, to repair to Head-Quarters, or to the quarters of the nearest general officer of the Continental army, or militia, until further provision can be made by the civil authority, and there deliver up such protection, certificate, and passports, and take the oath of allegiance to the United States of America; nevertheless hereby granting full liberty to all such as prefer the interest and protection of Great Britain to the freedom and happiness of their country, forthwith to withdraw themselves and families within the enemy's

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lines. And I do hereby declare, that all and every person, who may neglect or refuse to comply with this order, within thirty days from the date hereof, will be deemed adherents to the King of Great Britain, and treated as common enemies to these American States.

Given at Head-Quarters, Morristown, this 25th day of January, 1777.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 26 January, 1777.

SIR,

I was last night honored with yours of the 18th instant, enclosing a letter from the State of New York to Congress. From the particular situation of that State in regard to their being totally deprived of commerce, they certainly must stand in need of the assistance of the other States to provide them with clothing and every thing necessary for the equipment of their forces; and it ever was my intention to allow them a full pro-

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* It would hardly be imagined at the present day, that any exceptions could be taken to this proclamation. The circumstances of the case, in fact, seemed to require it, as a necessary check to the effects produced by the measures adopted on the part of the enemy. Yet it was disapproved by some, who believed themselves and doubtless were sincere patriots. Even in Congress there were those, who were not backward to hint, that it was inexpedient, and that, in issuing it, the Commander-in-chief had transgressed the bounds of his power. Mr. Abraham Clark, a delegate from New Jersey, and one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, expressed himself as follows, in a letter to Colonel Dayton.

"You say that some of our Elizabethtown people want the General to alter his proclamation. It must render any man unpopular to speak in favor of those, who joined the enemy and took protections; but I think the General's proclamation a violation of our civil rights, and I ventured to call it in question in Congress. My motion was committed to a committee, who reported favorably of the proclamation; but, foreseeing their report would be contested, they desired that the same might lie for consid-

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portion of the clothing purchased to the eastward, whenever it came to hand. Little or none of it has yet reached this army, though in the greatest want, and exposed to the severities of a winter campaign. The Convention have in one instance already provided for themselves out of the public stock, by stopping and making use of twenty-six bales of clothing coming on from the eastward to the army here. As this was done without consulting me, I took the liberty of desiring them not to do the like in future; not that I meant to deprive them of their share, but because it disappointed me of many articles, which I stood in immediate want of, and had not provided from other quarters. But you may be assured, that, whenever returns are made of the whole stock of clothing, they shall have their proportion, and, more than that, allowance for their peculiar situation.

I am amazed to hear the complaints of the hospital on the east side of Hudson's River. Dr. Morgan, with most of his mates, has been constantly there since I left it with the main body of the army. It is in vain, however, to look back upon past misfortunes. I will not

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eration; which, I suppose, was with the design that it should never be called for, and I presume it never will unless I do it, for it is notorious, that the General directly counteracted a resolve of Congress of the 9th of March last, strictly forbidding any officer to impose or require any oath of the inhabitants; and he requires an oath of allegiance to the United States, when such an oath is absurd before our confederation takes place. Each State requires an oath to that particular State. In many other things the proclamation is exceptionable and very improper. I believe the General is honest, but I think him fallible."—*MS. Letter, March 7th.*

This language is a little extraordinary for a delegate in Congress. The object of the proclamation was to draw a line of distinction between friends and foes, and the means provided were the mildest possible. It was certainly no hardship for persons to take an oath of allegiance to the authority from which they sought protection, nor could any one justly complain, that a month's time was not sufficient for removing within the enemy's lines, if that side of the alternative was preferred.

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pretend to point out the causes; but I know matters have been strangely conducted in the medical line. I hope your new appointment, when it is made, will make the necessary reform in the hospital, and that I shall not, the next campaign, have my ears, and eyes too, shocked with the complaints and looks of poor creatures perishing for want of proper care, either in the regimental or hospital surgeons. I agree with the Convention in the expediency of obstructing the passage of the North River in some place between the mouth and the Highlands. We have found that our labor and expense have been thrown away in endeavouring to do it below, where the channel is amazingly wide and deep; but, from the slight view I have had of the river above, I think the passage may be easily obstructed, and defended by proper fortifications, as the river is so narrow that no vessel going up could possibly escape the fire. I am no judge of what can be done towards fitting out the frigates at Poughkeepsie; that must be left to the gentlemen of the marine committee.

The hint given by the Convention of New York, of the necessity and utility of a commissary of forage, had struck me before, and had been mentioned by General Mifflin, whose department of quartermaster-general must be eased of part of the load, which is at present thrown upon it. He is obliged in many instances to act entirely out of his proper line; and instead of being confined to the duty of quartermaster-general, is also wagon-master and forage-master general. I have written to two persons, that I think qualified to fill the office of wagon-master; and I hope one of them will accept. That of commissary of forage shall be attended to. The want of accurate maps of the country, which has hitherto been the scene of war, has been of great disadvantage to me. I have in vain endeavoured to pro-

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cure them, and have been obliged to make shift with such sketches as I could trace out from my own observation, and that of gentlemen around me. I really think, if gentlemen of known character and probity could be employed in making maps, from actual survey, of the roads, of the rivers and bridges and fords over them, and of the mountains and passes through them, it would be of the greatest advantage.

I had, previous to the receipt of your letter, written to General Howe, and proposed the fixing of an agent for prisoners at New York. I have not received an answer; but, if he accedes to the proposal, I shall appoint Mr. Lewis Pintard. On the 23d, a party of four hundred of our men, under Colonel Buckner, fell in with two regiments of the enemy, convoying a number of wagons from Brunswic to Amboy. Our advanced party under Colonel Parker engaged them with great bravery upwards of twenty minutes, during which time the colonel-commandant was killed, and the second in command mortally wounded. The people living near the field of action say their killed and wounded were considerable. We lost only two men, who were made prisoners. Had Colonel Buckner come up with the main body, Colonel Parker and the other officers think we should have put them to rout, as their confusion was very great, and their ground disadvantageous. I have ordered Buckner under arrest, and shall bring him to trial to answer for so extraordinary a piece of conduct.

Reinforcements come up so extremely slow, that I am afraid I shall be left without any men before they arrive. The enemy must be ignorant of our numbers, or they have not horses to move their artillery, or they would not suffer us to remain undisturbed. I have repeatedly written to all the recruiting officers, to forward

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on their men as fast as they could arm and clothe them; but they are so extremely averse to turning out of comfortable quarters, that I cannot get a man to come near me, though I hear from all parts that the recruiting service goes on with great success. It would be well if the Board of War, in whose department it is, would issue orders for all officers to equip and forward their recruits to head-quarters with the greatest expedition. By a resolve Congress passed some time ago, General Schuyler is directed to apply to me for ninety-four tons of powder, a quantity which it is impossible I should have by me, and for which I do not know where to direct him to apply. I could wish that returns were made to me of the quantity of powder on hand, and where it is to be found, that I may not be at a loss at any time of emergency.

Since the resignation of Colonel Reed, the important office of adjutant-general has been left unfilled, I mean as to a principal, and I am much at a loss how or where to find a person in every way capable and proper to execute the office. My inclinations lead me to confer the appointment upon a Major Morris; but ample testimonials should be produced, and full proof of fidelity ought to be made, before an office of so high trust should be conferred upon a person in a manner a stranger to me. I only know Major Morris from a short personal acquaintance, and from report. He never even brought a letter of recommendation to me. From his conversation, and from the accounts I have received from others, he is a man of considerable military abilities; and, from his behaviour in two instances, he is a man of bravery and conduct. His story is simply this; that he left the British service in disgust upon not receiving a promotion to which he was justly entitled. Perhaps some gentlemen of Congress may know more

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about him, or may be able to make such inquiries as might satisfy them, as to the safety and propriety of appointing him. I have no other motive for wishing him a preference, than that I think him the properest person that has come under my notice, provided all matters before mentioned were cleared up. I shall wait the result of a determination of Congress, before I proceed further in this appointment; and I wish to be favored with their advice as speedily as possible; for the remains of the old army are much disarranged for want of a good adjutant-general, and the formation of the new one in a great measure depends upon an able officer in that line. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Morristown, 27 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

You will receive with this a copy of my letter to you of the 19th instant. Two reasons have led me to send it; the one lest the original may have miscarried; the other to explain it fully, if you have already received it. I do not mean to tie up your hands from effecting or even attempting any thing, that may prove honorable to yourself or useful to the cause. Although the original design of your movement may not be fully answered in all its parts, yet, if you can take possession of the country round about the city, or the city itself, I do not desire you to desist. I have not been favored with a line from you since the 19th, and that never reached me till this evening. I wish to hear from you frequently.

Wishing you success, I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Morristown, 28 January, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The express delivered to me your favor this evening. Ignorant as I am of the ground, which you occupy at the Scotch Plains, I cannot positively determine whether it is tenable or not. However, let me recommend to you to consider maturely whether the advantages, that may accrue from your neighbourhood to the enemy, can balance the consequences, that must result from your being driven from it. It is true, that your being posted so near them will save your scouts a few miles' marching. You have also a better chance of receiving good and early intelligence of their movements; but it is as true, that they may and will most certainly very soon discover your real numbers, and what will follow your being attacked I have already mentioned in mine of this date.* Consult Generals Maxwell and Stephen, lay my letters to you on this head before them, view your continuance there in every point of light, and if you determine that the service may be benefited by remaining where you are, I have no objections to your staying. I think it a manœuvre of the last consequence, and I am not without my fears about its success. You will assuredly be attacked in a few days, if they have any

* The Commander-in-chief had written in the morning to General Sullivan, as follows. — "Our affairs at present are in a prosperous way. The country seems to entertain an idea of our superiority. Recruiting goes on well, and a belief prevails, that the enemy are afraid of us. If then you should be driven, which nothing but the enemy's want of spirit can prevent, the tables will be turned, the country dispirited, and we shall again relapse into our former discredit. I therefore give it as my opinion, that you had better give your remove to the Scotch Plains the best coloring you can, and return to your former station, or to Springfield, for fear of consequences, which may be extremely injurious to us."

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spirit left. Knowing your strength, they will do it with a force that will command success, for it will be out of my power to relieve you in time. Should you determine to remove, remember to give it the air of some manœuvre, that the enemy may be at a loss what to think of it. I am, &c.

TO RICHARD CASWELL, GOVERNOR OF NORTH CAROLINA.*

Morristown, 31 January, 1777.

SIR,

The great countenance and protection shown and given to deserters, by persons in the different neighbourhoods, from whence they originally came, has made that vice so prevalent in the army, that, unless some very effectual measures are fallen upon to prevent it, our new army will scarcely be raised, before it will again dwindle and waste away from that cause alone. I know of no remedy so effectual, as for the different States immediately to pass laws, laying a very severe penalty upon those, who harbour or fail to give information against deserters, knowing them to be such, and strictly enjoining all justices of the peace, and officers of militia to keep a watchful eye over and apprehend all such persons, as shall return from the army without a discharge. In order that this most salutary measure may be carried speedily into execution, I have not only desired Congress to recommend it to the different States, but have myself written circular letters to them all, pressing their compliance with my request. Desertion must cease of course, when the offenders find that they have no shelter. I have the honor to be, &c.

* This letter was sent as a circular to all the States.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Morristown, 3 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Your two favors of the 30th ultimo reached me last night. I cannot say but I was a good deal surprised and disappointed at the contents. I never was very sanguine, as to any thing more being effected, than to oblige the garrison either to surrender or evacuate Fort Independence and retire within the Island. As neither has been done, I wish your summons had never been sent, as I am fearful it will expose us to the ridicule of our enemies. By falling back as far as you have done, one valuable purpose of your going down is lost, and that is, depriving the enemy of the forage of which they are in extreme want, and collecting it for our own use.

If my accounts from Brunswic are true, the enemy have, notwithstanding your being upon their backs, drawn considerable reinforcements from New York. If so, and you think that nothing of consequence can be effected by you in the neighbourhood of Kingsbridge, I would have you leave a sufficient force at Peekskill to make the passes secure, and throw the remainder over the river with orders to march immediately down here. For if the troops return from Rhode Island, and do not find you in Westchester county, they will certainly join their main body at Brunswic, and the garrison of York Island may likewise be much reduced, and the troops drawn from thence be likewise sent here. We must, in that case, collect all our force to oppose theirs. I wish we could possibly have foreseen, that the diversion upon your side would not have had the desired effect; for with the addition of the three thousand four hundred men, that have been with you, we could have distracted the enemy with a variety of attacks, and made some

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considerable advantages. The report of Carleton's army having joined Howe's is certainly without foundation.* In one of your former letters, you desired leave to return for a while to New England, when the service would admit of it. I have no objection to your doing it. I only request that you will come back as soon as your private affairs will admit, for several of the general officers are desirous of making a visit to their respective homes, before the campaign opens in the spring.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL HEATH.

Morristown, 3 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

This letter is in addition to my public one of this date. It is to hint to you, and I do it with concern, that your conduct is censured (and by men of sense and judgment, who have been with you on the expedition to Fort Independence,) as being fraught with too much caution, by which the army has been disappointed, and in some degree disgraced. Your summons, as you did not attempt to fulfil your threats, was not only idle but farcical, and will not fail of turning the laugh exceedingly upon us. These things I mention to you as a friend, for you will perceive that they have composed no part of my public letter. Why you

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* A person had come out of New York to General Heath with the intelligence, that General Carleton's army had lately arrived in New York by water, and formed a junction with General Howe, before he went into Jersey, and that a very small garrison was left in Quebec. It was likewise reported, that the detachment from Rhode Island under Lord Percy was expected to land in Westchester county, in the rear of General Heath.

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should be so apprehensive of being surrounded, even if Lord Percy had landed, I cannot conceive. You know that landing men, and procuring horses, are not the work of an hour, a day, or even a week.

Upon the whole it appears to me from information, that, if you had pushed vigorously, upon your first going to Fort Independence, the post would have been carried; and may it not yet be taken by surprise? It is nothing for a party of light troops to march twelve or fourteen miles in the course of five or six hours. An expedition therefore undertaken with precaution, and conducted with secrecy in a dark night, may be attended with fortunate consequences. I drop this hint; you may improve or reject it, as circumstances will justify. Too large a body for such an enterprise might be unwieldy, and expose the measure to discovery.*

I am, dear Sir, &c.

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* This expedition was originally a project of the Convention of New York, and, by the consent and order of General Washington, who also had a larger object in view, it was put under the direction of General Heath, as the Continental commander in that district. General John Morin Scott headed a body of the New York coöperating militia. This gentleman and Mr. William Duer, both members of the Convention, were, with two or three others, appointed a committee to manage the affair in behalf of that assembly. — *MS. Journal of the Convention, December 19th, 21st, 23d,* 1776. They wrote separately to General Washington, disapproving the manner in which the attempt had been conducted. General Parsons expressed himself to the same effect.

In reply to the above letter, General Heath wrote; — "When I received your Excellency's orders to march towards Kingsbridge, nothing could be more agreeable; but I cannot say that the taking command of a body of troops entirely militia was so. It was indeed far otherwise. Upon my arrival before the fort, I summoned the garrison to surrender, as your Excellency is sensible is the practice on the first investing of a place. And this I did in particular at the motion of a gentleman before I left Peekskill, as it was supposed the garrison consisted of Hessian troops, and from some preceding circumstances it might answer a very good purpose. And although some of the enemy may laugh at a fort being summoned and not taken, I believe they will scarcely publish the summons. After this I called a council of war, as I did in every instance of importance during

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TO SAMUEL CHASE, IN CONGRESS.

Morristown, 5 February, 1777.

SIR,

I have yours of the 23d of January, enclosing a resolution of Congress, whereby you are appointed one of seven gentlemen, to inquire into the conduct of the British and Hessian officers towards the officers and soldiers in the service of the States, and towards the inhabitants of the States of New Jersey and New York. To take a particular account of all the ravages and devastations would be endless. I shall therefore employ some proper person to take the depositions of people in the different parts of the province of New Jersey, who have been plundered after having taken protection and subscribed the Declaration.

One thing I must remark in favor of the Hessians, and that is, that our people, who have been prisoners, generally agree that they received much kinder treatment from them, than from the British officers and sol-

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our continuance before the fort, and in every one of them the council was unanimous. I have taken the liberty of enclosing one of them, namely, that preceding our removal, by which your Excellency will perceive, that the landing of Lord Percy to surround us was not so much as mentioned. The facts were briefly these. The troops were scattered in a circle of more than eight miles. We tried to hut them, but the rain had driven four of General Lincoln's regiments from their huts, with the loss of nearly all their ammunition. The enemy had sallied early one morning and surprised one of our out-guards. The regiment nearest the place was struck with a panic, and had quitted their quarters, leaving their baggage. The troops were so scattered as not to be collected in less than two or three hours; in which case those that were quartered within cannon-shot of the fort would be entirely cut to pieces before they could be supported. A diffidence and uneasiness were discovered in even the bravest officers, in such a situation, and a universal desire to get more advantageously quartered. Every officer objected to a storm, as they apprehended the militia inadequate to such an enterprise. Every purpose it was supposed would be, and has been, answered by the troops in their present cantonment, except that of reducing the fort." — *Letter, February 6th.*

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diers. The barbarities at Princeton were all committed by the British, there being no Hessians there. I sent General Howe a deposition taken from Lieutenant Yates, who afterwards died of the wounds he received after he surrendered; but you will see by a copy of a letter transmitted to Congress, that General Howe disavows and reprobates all such proceedings. There has been another instance of barbarity in a skirmish on the 1st of this month. Lieutenant Kelly of the fifth Virginia regiment was slightly wounded in the thigh, but, before he could get off the field, he was overtaken and cruelly murdered. General Stephen sent in a flag to Sir William Erskine, complaining of this savage manner of carrying on war; but I do not know his answer. I have heard, that orders were given at Trenton to make no prisoners, but kill all that fell into their hands; but of this there is no proof. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 5 February, 1777.

SIR,

By a letter from General Heath, of the 30th of last month, I find that he had decamped from the neighbourhood of Kingsbridge, and removed back towards the White Plains. His reasons for doing so were, that the troops could not stand the inclemency of the weather, and that he feared the troops expected from Rhode Island would land upon his back. I have, however, directed him to leave a body of light troops under an active officer, in order to harass their foraging parties, and to cover our own, who are to remove as much of the forage from Westchester county as they can; and, after leaving as many men as will secure the passes in

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the Highlands, the remainder are to be sent over here to join me; for I am apprehensive that the enemy are reinforcing themselves at Brunswic. I shall to-morrow send out parties from every quarter to remove all the wagons, horses, cattle, and sheep, or as many as possible, from the neighbourhood of the enemy's lines. They are to attend particularly to the horses; for, if we can reduce those that they at present have, and can hinder them from getting fresh ones from the adjacent country, it will be impossible for them to move their artillery and wagons forward, should they incline to make another push towards Philadelphia.

The secretary of the Board of War has transmitted to me extracts of General Schuyler's letters, in which he calls pressingly for some general officers to be sent to his assistance. This will show you the necessity of immediately making the promotions recommended in mine of the 22d of January; for at present I cannot spare a general officer from this quarter without injuring the service.

The smallpox has made such head in every quarter, that I find it impossible to keep it from spreading through the whole army in the natural way. I have therefore determined, not only to inoculate all the troops now here that have not had it, but shall order Dr. Shippen to inoculate the recruits as fast as they come to Philadelphia. They will lose no time, because they will go through the disorder while their clothing, arms, and accoutrements are getting ready.

From the first institution of civil government, it has been the national policy of every precedent State to endeavour to engage its members to the discharge of their public duty by the obligation of some oath. Its force and happy influence have been felt in too many instances to need any arguments to support the policy or

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prove its utility. I have often thought the States have been too negligent in this particular, and am more fully convinced of it from the effect General Howe's excursion has produced in New Jersey. An oath is the only substitute that can be adopted to supply the defect of principle. By our inattention in this article, we lose a considerable cement to our own force, and give the enemy an opportunity to make the first tender of the oath of allegiance to the King. Its baneful influence is but too severely felt at this time. The people generally confess they were compelled to take protection, and subscribe the *Declaration*, yet it furnishes many with arguments to refuse taking any active part; and further they allege themselves bound to a neutrality at least. Many conscientious people, who were well-wishers to the cause, had they been bound to the States by an oath, would have suffered any punishment rather than have taken the oath of allegiance to the King; and are now lost to our interest for want of this necessary tie. Notwithstanding the obligation of the *Association*, they do not conceive it to have the same effect as an oath. The more united the inhabitants appear, the greater difficulty General Howe will have in reconciling them to regal government, and consequently the less hope of conquering them. For these reasons, and many more that might be urged, I should strongly recommend to every State to fix upon some oath or affirmation of allegiance, to be tendered to all the inhabitants without exception, and to outlaw those that refuse it.

I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Morristown, 6 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I was this evening favored with your letter of the 30th ultimo, and am sorry to find the forces now assembled in Rhode Island are not competent to the projects you have in view.* The propriety of the attack, or of the plan, I cannot determine. The map you sent, and for which I return you my thanks, gives me an idea of the situation of the Island, but not so accurately as to pronounce upon the matter with precision. If the attack can be made, with a strong probability, almost amounting to a certainty of success, it is much to be desired; otherwise I would not advise it; for, as a favorable issue would be productive of the most valuable and important consequences, so on the other hand a miscarriage would lead to those of the most melancholy nature. I have written to General Spencer on the subject, wishing every thing respecting the measure to be duly weighed, previous to an attempt, and have con-

* Generals Spencer and Arnold, who were stationed at Providence, had formed a plan for attacking the enemy on Rhode Island. When the enemy's forces first landed at Newport, they consisted of eleven regiments of British, and four of Hessians, amounting in all to about six thousand men. On the 21st of January two thousand of these men embarked in twenty-four transports, and sailed out of the harbour as it was supposed for New York. This diminished the numbers on the Island so much, that it was thought an attempt to dislodge them might be made with a fair prospect of success. A plan was laid for this purpose; but there were only four thousand troops at Providence, and those mostly raw militia, and not more than one thousand more, of the same description, were expected. This force was not deemed sufficient in quality or strength to attack, under many disadvantages, fortified posts manned by veterans; and therefore Spencer and Arnold requested permission to call to their assistance four or five regiments of Continental troops from Massachusetts and Connecticut. After making considerable preparation, and some ineffectual attempts to procure men in the adjoining states, the enterprise was finally laid aside as impracticable with the force at command.

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sented, that if, after mature deliberation upon all the circumstances, the officers think the enterprise advisable, four or five Continental regiments may be called in aid. I suggested to him the difficulty of passing a river to attack an enemy, and of making a good retreat in case of repulse. This is obvious, and I am satisfied will not escape your attention. Whatever may be determined on I trust will be founded in prudence, and I hope crowned with success.

Nothing of consequence has occurred of late in the military line in this quarter. The enemy still remain in Brunswic. Our force is at the neighbouring posts, to prevent as much as possible their obtaining forage and supplies of provisions. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL PARSONS.*

Morristown, 8 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Since General Heath, by his retreat to White Plains, has given the enemy time to recover themselves, I do not know at this time what can be better done in that quarter than adopting the plan you propose, of crossing over to the east end of Long Island and destroying the forage. I am so fully convinced of the good effects of this enterprise, that I have ordered it to be done gene-

* General Parsons was now in Connecticut, with orders to superintend the recruiting service in that state, and to forward the men to the army as fast as they could be got in readiness. He suggested a plan for a descent upon the eastern parts of Long Island, and inquired of General Washington in what light the inhabitants, who had taken an oath of allegiance to the King, should be considered, and whether the estates of those, who had taken an active part against the country, should be regarded as enemy's property. The inoculation of the troops for the smallpox caused a delay of this plan till it was too late in the season to make the attempt, they being ordered in the mean time to join the main army.

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rally in the neighbourhood of the enemy here, in which success has attended us to our utmost wish. You will endeavour at the same time to bring off all the draft-horses fit for service. Colonel Henry B. Livingston, of the New York State, was lately with me, and has my orders to this purpose. With him you will please to concert a good plan.

From the enclosed proclamation you will be able to regulate your conduct with regard to the Tories. No form of an oath of allegiance is yet drawn up, but you can easily strike off one, that will answer the end designed. They have permission to carry in with them their necessary wearing apparel, but nothing that can possibly be useful to the enemy. Their estates must be secured till the civil power determine what shall be done. I have written to the New England States on the subject of arming the troops they are to raise. You will get their answer. You will please to publish the enclosed general order.* I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Morristown, 9 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I should hope that General Carleton will not attempt to pass the Lakes, before we can get a sufficient force to oppose him. The enterprise I think will be dangerous and attended with many difficulties. However, as the defence and security of our posts in that quarter is an object of the first importance, I have written in the most urgent manner to the States of Massachusetts and New Hampshire, to forward on their regiments with all

* The order against plundering, contained in this volume, p. 293.

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possible expedition, desiring that they may not wait till they are complete, but that suitable officers may be left to recruit for the deficiencies. As to forming the northern army out of a mixture of troops, I think it cannot be done, under the peculiar situation of our affairs. The posts on the Lakes are much more convenient to the eastern forces, than to any other, and they can be there sooner, than at other places, where the aid of the rest is indispensably necessary. Another objection to the measure is, that prejudices and jealousies have prevailed where the troops of different States have acted together, notwithstanding every possible exertion on my part to induce them to harmonize, and consider themselves as the same people, engaged in the same noble struggle and having one common and general interest to defend, and to lay aside and bury all attachments and distinctions of a local and provincial nature. These I think are not likely to be entirely done away, especially if general officers should be appointed by Congress from each State for their respective troops. Indeed, as their difficulties have not been reconcilable heretofore, I hope their acting separately will produce a laudable spirit of emulation to excel, and raise the reputation of their respective States, tending in the end to advance the interest and weal of the whole. I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL KNOX.

Morristown, 11 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have yours of the 1st instant, enclosing a copy of a memorial, which you had presented to the Council and House of Representatives of the State of Massachu-

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setts.* I most sincerely wish that your representation may be attended with the success it deserves, and that I could with propriety press the subject of it upon them in the manner you desire. To advise them to give the bounty of twenty pounds to the additional battalions, as well as to their quota of the eighty-eight, would be giving my sanction to and approbation of a measure, which I have ever reprobated, as an indirect breach of the union, and of the agreement entered into by their delegates in Congress to give a Continental bounty of twenty dollars a man and no more. But thus much I have done. I have written to the Council and Assembly, and have given it as my opinion, that they ought to furnish the three additional regiments of infantry and one of artillery; because, when the Congress voted an addition of sixteen battalions of foot, four battalions of artillery, and

* General Knox was now in Boston to expedite the raising of a battalion of artillery in Massachusetts. The different bounties given to recruits by the different States, particularly in New England, caused a good deal of embarrassment in raising the new army. Congress had resolved to allow a bounty of twenty dollars to every soldier enlisting into the new establishment for three years, or during the war. A committee of delegates from the several New England States had recently assembled at Providence, for the purpose of consulting on affairs common to them all, and particularly to take into consideration some method of regulating the prices of the necessary articles of life, which had become so disproportioned to the wages of soldiers and the laboring classes, that much distress was likely to ensue. This committee recommended to each of the States, which its members represented, to add a bounty of thirty-three dollars and one third to the Continental bounty of twenty dollars, in raising their quotas of the eighty-eight battalions. But, instead of the bounty proposed by the committee, the legislature of Massachusetts offered double that amount, or sixty-six dollars and two thirds, which, added to the Continental bounty, made the extraordinary sum of eighty-six dollars and two thirds as a gift in advance to every soldier at the time of enlisting. It was urged in explanation, that the monthly pay of the Continental soldiers was so low as to afford no reasonable inducement for men to leave their farms, and the legislature chose this mode of giving them a proper compensation in preference to an enlargement of their monthly pay, which had been objected to by Congress as tending to produce dissatisfaction in the army. New

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three thousand light-horse, and gave the appointment of them to me, they certainly expected, though it was not expressed, that I should observe some rule of proportion in allotting them to the different States; and a better I thought I could not follow, than the proportion settled by Congress themselves in fixing the quotas of the eighty-eight battalions. Upon this scale three battalions of infantry and one of artillery were but a moderate demand on the State of Massachusetts; for there have been raised and are now raising in the other States, exclusive of the eighty-eight battalions, the German battalion, a battalion of riflemen lately under the command of Colonel Stephenson, and the regiment called Hazen's, or *Congress's Own*, which is to consist, when completed, of two thousand men. Each State is bound by every principle of justice to furnish its proportion of the additional battalions, as much as it is of the eighty-eight; and

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Hampshire gave the same bounties as Massachusetts. In Connecticut and Rhode Island additional bounties were likewise given. Governor Trumbull advanced strong arguments, in a letter to Washington, in support of the justice and policy of these bounties, the basis of which was the greatly increased expenses of living since the war began, and the impossibility that the soldiers in the New England States, many of whom were married, could supply proper relief to their families from their ordinary pay. Special bounties were in some cases given by the towns.

The bounties were intended for the eighty-eight battalions only, but in Connecticut, and it is believed in the other States, the additional regiments were put on the same footing. But there was a particular inconvenience in this affair of the bounties, as it operated on the re-enlistment of the soldiers already in the army. An order had been issued by the Commander-in-chief, on the 1st of February, expressly forbidding any officer to give or promise a greater bounty, in raising men for the eighty-eight battalions, than that offered by Congress, or to enlist them from the lines of one State to serve in those of another. The consequence was, that the soldiers from the States, where additional bounties were allowed, would not re-enlist, but preferred to wait till the times of their original enlistments should expire, and then return home and secure the bounty. Whatever may have been the necessity of the measure, it was thronged with difficulties in every mode of its application, and was a source of perplexities and vexations to the Commander-in-chief.

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I dare say, if I had not distributed the commissions among the officers of the different States, those who had been neglected would have charged me with partiality.

If the State of Massachusetts will not consent to give its assistance towards raising the three additional regiments of infantry, I have urged to it the necessity of raising the battalion of artillery at least in that State, because most of the artillery-men, who served in your regiment last campaign, came from thence, and will be immediately useful.

Congress had resolved to adhere to Carlisle in Pennsylvania, and Brookfield in Massachusetts, as the places for erecting the laboratories. I do not think the odds between Carlisle and York anywise material, and therefore the works will be built at the former place; but, upon your representation of the delay that will be occasioned if Brookfield is preferred to Springfield, I desire you may proceed with the works at the latter place, and I will inform Congress of the necessity of this variation from their resolve. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MAXWELL.*

Morristown, 12 February, 1777.

SIR,

In answer to your letter of the 9th instant, respecting the case of the young men of Elizabethtown, who refuse to take the oath of allegiance to the States, or to with-

* In conformity with General Washington's Proclamation, General Maxwell, who commanded near the enemy's lines at Elizabethtown, had ordered such persons, as would not take the oath required, to go immediately to the enemy. Several refused to do either the one or the other, on the ground, that by the terms of the Proclamation they were not obliged to go till the expiration of thirty days. On this subject General Maxwell wrote for instructions. It would seem that many of the inhabitants of

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draw within the enemy's lines, and discourage all the militia about them, I would observe, that though it is my desire to have the terms of my Proclamation religiously complied with, yet I do not intend that it shall be made a shelter under which our enemies may injure us with impunity. These fellows at Elizabethtown, as well as all others, who wish to remain with us, till the expiration of the thirty days, for no other purpose than to convey intelligence to the enemy, and poison our people's minds, must and shall be compelled to withdraw immediately within the enemy's lines; others, who are hesitating which side to take, and behave friendly to us till they determine, must be treated with lenity. Such as go over to the enemy are not to take with them any thing but their clothing and furniture. Their horses, cattle, and forage must be left behind. Such as incline to share our fate are to have every assistance afforded them, that can be granted with safety. Neither wagons nor horses must be too much hazarded in doing this business. The effects of all persons in arms against us

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New Jersey, as intimated above (p. 298), and even those in power, were not perfectly satisfied with the Proclamation of the Commander-in-chief, issued within the borders of that State, and requiring an oath of allegiance to the United States. The following is an extract from the minutes of the Council, dated February 20th.

"The Council, having taken into consideration the Proclamation of his Excellency General Washington of the 25th of January last, whereby it appears that certain of the inhabitants of this State are required to repair to head-quarters, or to the quarters of the nearest general officer of the Continental army or militia, and 'take the oath of allegiance to the *United States of America*;'

"Resolved, that his Excellency the Governor be requested to write to his Excellency General Washington, to know whether by the oath above mentioned is to be understood the oath of allegiance prescribed by an act of the General Assembly of this State; and, if not, that they request to be furnished with a copy of the oath administered by virtue of the said Proclamation."

The Governor accordingly wrote to General Washington, enclosing this resolve, to which he replied;—"I fear it is not in my power to give so

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must be seized and secured. I wish this line of conduct to be observed by our parties, for which purpose you will make them all acquainted with my determination on this head. I am, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL MIFFLIN.

Morristown, 14 February, 1777.

SIR,

I have not till now had time to answer yours of the 4th instant.* My sentiments respecting the treatment proper to be observed to *martyrs* coincide with yours. Lenity will operate with greater force, in such instances, than rigor. It is therefore my first wish to have our whole conduct distinguished by it. Still it is not my desire, neither indeed is it within my power, to release any man from a confinement imposed upon him by the civil authority. They best know the charge, and the merit of the case; consequently they should ultimately determine it. For these reasons I dare not comply with your request.

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full and satisfactory an answer to your request, 'to explain the nature of the oath administered by virtue of my Proclamation,' as you may expect. What the style of it was, as administered by the brigadiers, to whom that business was chiefly assigned, I cannot precisely tell. My instructions to them were, to insist on nothing more than an obligation *in no manner to injure the States*, without reverting to the form of any prescribed law of this State. Had I known of any particular form adapted to the circumstances of its inhabitants, I would most certainly have ordered it."—*Letter, March 3d.*

* In that letter General Mifflin had written;—"The enclosed papers were given to me with a request to forward them to your Excellency. I do not pretend to censure the proceedings of the gentlemen, but I think it bad policy to confine persons, who will act the part of martyrs, and who cannot consistently with their own principles take an active part against us. If your Excellency thinks proper to order a release, it will gratify many of your friends, and prevent some, who wish to injure our cause, from charging us with cruelty and an imitation of the enemy."

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I have enclosed a letter from Mr. Sears; the business falls within your department. I am, Sir, yours, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 14 February, 1777.

SIR,

General Lincoln is just arrived with a regiment of Massachusetts militia, about two hundred and fifty. This, he says, is succeeded by three more, which will make in the whole near eighteen hundred; but in this I think he must be mistaken, unless those on the march are much fuller and larger than what they usually are. The whole are of the troops, that were with General Heath.

General Knox, by a letter of the 1st instant, informs me, that, on mature inquiry and examination, he finds Springfield to be more convenient and much better calculated for a laboratory and cannon-foundery, than any other part of the New England States. He adds, that a quantity of copper, tin, and other useful materials can be had there; and that the necessary works and preparations, from these and other advantages, can be accomplished at least three or four months sooner there than any where else. In consequence of his opinion, which I esteem of weight, particularly in this instance, and knowing the importance of these establishments and how essential they are, I have ventured to order the works to be begun there, without regard to what had been done at Brookfield, which was of but little consequence. The former, besides the many advantages mentioned by General Knox, stands on Connecticut River, and has a good navigation; yet is entirely secure against any attempts of the enemy, being twenty miles above Hartford, where the river is narrow, and too shoal to admit

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vessels that can give the least annoyance. As nothing but the good of the service could have led to this measure, I trust it will be approved.

I have written to the Assembly of Massachusetts State, and the Convention of New Hampshire, requesting their good offices and exertions to promote the raising of their regiments as expeditiously as possible, and to forward the whole of the quotas first exacted from them to Ticonderoga. Their contiguity to that post more than to any other, the importance of it, and General Schuyler's apprehensions, that the enemy may attempt to pass the Lake, if not on the ice, as soon as it is open, added to the great trouble, expense, and loss of time it will save in marching them elsewhere, and others thither, who are much more remote, induced me to determine so. I find the Council of the former, on General Schuyler's earnest application, before my letter reached them, had determined to send four regiments as soon as they could be completed. I only wish the whole may be made up in a short time, and that their arrival may be early enough to prevent those inconveniences and fatal consequences, which the want of a sufficient force in that quarter would subject us to, were the enemy to pass the Lakes at this time.

Mr. James Mease is now here in consequence of being appointed clothier-general. He is adjusting a plan for answering the end of his appointment, and making an estimate, to be laid before Congress, or their Secret Committee, of such clothes as may be necessary to import for the army. It is with much concern, that the situation of our affairs obliges me to mention so frequently the want of money, especially when I am persuaded every means are used to furnish it. Our distress on this account is great indeed; and the injury the service receives almost inconceivable; not a day,

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an hour, or scarcely a minute passes, without complaints and applications on this head. The recruiting of the regiments is most materially retarded by it.

Ten o'clock, P. M. Just now a flag returned, that went to Brunswic to-day, who brought the enclosed letters from General Lee, which I do myself the honor to transmit you, with a copy of one to myself.* I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL CÆSAR RODNEY.

Morristown, 18 February, 1777.

SIR,

Lord Stirling did me the favor of sending to me your letter to him, mentioning your cheerfulness to continue in service, though your brigade had returned home, and waiting my determination on that head. The readiness with which you took the field, at the most critical period of our affairs, the industry you used in bringing out the militia of the Delaware State, and the alertness observed by you in forwarding the troops from Trenton, reflect the highest honor on your character, and place your attachment to the cause in a most distinguished point of view. They claim my sincere thanks, and I am happy in this opportunity of giving them to you. Circumstanced as you are, I see no necessity of detaining you longer from your family and affairs, which no doubt demand your presence and attention. You have therefore my leave to return. I am, Sir, &c.

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* General Lee's Letter to Washington, here mentioned, was dated at New York, February 9th, in which he said; "As Lord and General Howe have given me permission to send the enclosed to the Congress, and as the contents are of the last importance to me, and perhaps not less so to the community, I most earnestly entreat, my dear General, that you will despatch it immediately, and order the Congress to be as expeditious

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 20 February, 1777.

SIR,

The principal design of this is to inform you, that we have strong reasons to believe, that the enemy are on the point of making some push. What their object is, whether to beat up our quarters and to extend their own, to make a large forage and collection of provender, of which they are in great want, or to turn their views towards the Delaware, is a matter of uncertainty; but it seems probable that one of these things they have in contemplation. Such of their troops as have returned from Rhode Island have landed at Amboy, and with them several pieces of heavy artillery. General Howe is come over too, and, it is said, Lord Percy. Their

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as possible." In the letter to Congress, which was enclosed, General Lee requested that two or three gentlemen might be sent immediately to New York, to whom he would communicate what he conceived to be of the greatest importance, assuring Congress that Lord and General Howe would grant a safe conduct to the gentlemen thus deputed. This was the substance of his letter, but he did not hint at the nature of the proposed communication, nor offer any remarks from which his object could be inferred. Congress decided, that it was inexpedient to send any of their members to confer with General Lee; and to this decision they adhered, although he wrote another pressing letter reiterating the request. —*Journals, February 21st, March 29th.* This refusal General Lee seemed to take much to heart, although he never explained precisely the objects for which he desired an interview. The following brief letter to General Washington will indicate the state of his feelings.

"New York, 5 April, 1777.

"MY DEAR SIR,

"It is a most unfortunate circumstance for myself, and I think not less so for the public, that the Congress have not thought proper to comply with my request. It could not possibly have been attended with any ill consequences, and might with good ones. At least it was an indulgence, which I thought my situation entitled me to. But I am unfortunate in every thing, and this stroke is the severest I have yet experienced. God send you a different fate. Adieu, my dear General. Yours most truly and affectionately,

"CHARLES LEE."

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number at Brunswic and the landing-place, before the arrival of this last reinforcement, was estimated from seven to eight thousand. I have ordered the utmost vigilance and attention to be observed at our several posts, to guard against surprises, and every preparation to be made, that the feeble state of our little army will admit of. At this time we are only about four thousand strong, a force, you will suppose, unequal to a successful opposition, if they were not militia, and far too small for the exigencies of our affairs. It is impossible to obtain exact returns, though they are daily called for, owing to the frequent and almost constant departure of some of the corps.

Colonel Nielson of Brunswic, with a detachment of militia, on the morning of the 18th, surprised Major Stockton, whom he took with fifty-nine privates of General Skinner's corps, killing four, and bringing away the arms of the whole, with some blankets.* This about balances the loss of a militia guard, which a party of British troops took last week in Monmouth, near the Hook. I wish to be informed how the regiments that are raising are to be armed, and of the provision that has been made for the same. I have reason to fear, indeed I am convinced, that there is a great deficiency in many, if not in the whole of the States, in this article. Every letter that I receive from them mentions their want, and calls for supplies.†

I have the honor to be, &c.

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* General Skinner was a royalist of New Jersey, and his corps consisted of persons of that description, who had taken advantage of General Howe's Proclamation, and given in their adhesion to the King.

† Mr. Burke, a member of Congress from North Carolina, sent to the Governor of that State a sketch of the debate on the principal subject of this letter, which was marked with much warmth. There was a unanimous disposition, however, for using every possible effort to strengthen

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 20 February, 1777.

SIR,

Monsieur Faneuil, who some time ago laid a plan before you for raising and officering a corps of Frenchmen, waited upon me yesterday. His success, as I expected, has been small in enlisting or rather engaging Canadians. I cannot find that he has met with more than thirty or forty, who would be willing to serve with him. He is now upon another scheme, that of raising, arming, and clothing a number of men in the French Islands. To grant a commission of that kind is without the extent of my powers, and I have therefore desired him to go forward, and lay his proposals before Congress. If they appear feasible, they may be adopted; but I would beg leave to observe, that one precaution will be necessary, that is, that the commissions of Monsieur Faneuil and his officers should depend upon the performance of their agreement for raising any certain number of men.

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the army, and ample resolutions to this effect were passed. — *Journals, February 24th.* One of the resolutions was closed with the following superfluous, not to say pompous paragraph, — "it being the earnest desire of Congress to make the army under the immediate command of General Washington sufficiently strong, not only to curb and confine the enemy within their present quarters, and prevent them from drawing support of any kind from the country, but, by the Divine blessing, totally to subdue them before they can be reinforced." In discussing this paragraph strong indications were given of the temper and secret sentiments of the members. Mr. Burke observes, "Jersey, Pennsylvania, North Carolina, and South Carolina voted for expunging it; the four Eastern States, Virginia, and Georgia for retaining it. There appeared through this whole debate a great desire, in some of the delegates from the Eastern States, and in one from New Jersey, to insult the General." In this fact we discover the silent workings of the spirit of hostility to the Commander-in-chief, which assumed a formidable aspect both in Congress and in the army before the end of the year.

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I have often mentioned to you the distress I am every now and then laid under by the application of French officers for commissions in our service. This evil, if I may call it so, is a growing one; for, from what I learn, they are coming in swarms from old France and the Islands. There will therefore be a necessity of providing for them or discountenancing them. To do the first is difficult; and the last disagreeable, and perhaps impolitic, if they are men of merit; and it is impossible to distinguish these from mere adventurers, of whom I am convinced there is the greater number. They seldom bring more than a commission and passport, which, we know, may belong to a bad as well as a good officer. Their ignorance of our language, and their inability to recruit men, are insurmountable obstacles to their being ingrafted into our Continental battalions; for our officers, who have raised their men, and have served through the war upon pay that has hitherto not borne their expenses, would be disgusted if foreigners were put over their heads; and, I assure you, few or none of these gentlemen look lower than field-officers' commissions. To give them all brevets, by which they have rank and draw pay without doing any service, is saddling the continent with a vast expense; and to form them into corps would be only establishing corps of officers; for, as I said before, they cannot possibly raise any men.

Some general mode of disposing of them must be adopted; for it is ungenerous to keep them in suspense, and at great charge to themselves; but I am at a loss how to point out this mode. Suppose they were told in general, that no man could obtain a commission, except he could raise a number of men in proportion to his rank. This would effectually stop the mouths of common appliers, and would leave us at liberty to make

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provision for gentlemen of undoubted military character and merit, who would be very useful to us as soon as they acquired our language. If you approve of this, or can think of any better method, be pleased to inform me as soon as you possibly can; for, if I had a decisive answer to give them, it would not only save me much trouble but much time, which I am now obliged to bestow in hearing their different pretensions to merit, and their expectations thereupon. I inclose you the papers, which Monsieur Faneuil originally laid before the Council of Massachusetts; they may be of use if you enter into negotiation with him.* I have the honor to be, &c.

TO PATRICK HENRY, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

Morristown, 24 February, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Mr. Walker has, I doubt not, informed you of the situation in which I have placed him, in order that he may obtain the best information, and, at the same time, have his real design hid from the world; thereby avoid-

* Monsieur Faneuil's scheme was not approved by Congress. In reference to the last part of the above letter, Congress informed General Washington, that in their opinion no foreign officers ought to receive commissions in the army, who were not well acquainted with the English language, and did not bring strong testimonials of their abilities. — *Journals, March 14th.*

After having been pressed by General Washington to increase the number of generals in the army, by promotion and new appointments, Congress on the 19th of February appointed five major-generals, namely, Stirling, Mifflin, St. Clair, Stephen, and Lincoln. The last was taken for the first time into the Continental service, having till now commanded the Massachusetts militia. Ten brigadier-generals were elected on the 21st of February, namely, Poor, Glover, Paterson, Wayne, Varnum, Dehaas, Weedon, Muhlenberg, John Cadwalader, and Woodford. The appointment was not accepted by Cadwalader. He had not been previously in the Continental service, but had acquired much reputation by his command of the Pennsylvania militia.

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ing the evils, which might otherwise result from such appointments, if adopted by other States. It will naturally occur to you, Sir, that there are some secrets, on the keeping of which depends oftentimes the salvation of an army; secrets which cannot or at least ought not to be intrusted to paper; nay, which none but the Commander-in-chief, at the time, should be acquainted with.

If Mr. Walker's commission, therefore, from the Commonwealth of Virginia, should be known, it would, I am persuaded, be followed by others of the like nature from other States, which would be no better than so many marplots. To avoid the precedent, therefore, and from your character of Mr. Walker, and the high opinion I myself entertain of his abilities, honor, and prudence, I have taken him into my family as an extra aid-de-camp, and shall be happy if, in this character, he can answer your expectations. I sincerely thank you, Sir, for your kind congratulations on the late success of the Continental arms (would to God it may continue), and for your polite mention of me. Let me earnestly entreat, that the troops raised in Virginia for this army be forwarded on by companies, or otherwise, without delay, and as well equipped as possible for the field, or we shall be in no condition to open the campaign. With every sentiment of respect and regard,

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY.

Morristown, 28 February, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

I yesterday received a letter from Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell of the 71st regiment, dated in Concord gaol

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on the 4th of this month.* The Colonel, in this letter, gives me an account of such severity of his confinement, as is scarcely ever inflicted upon the most atrocious criminals. The following extract from his letter shows the reasons, that were given to him upon his being confined. — "The first of this month, I was carried and lodged in the common gaol of Concord, by an order of Congress, through the Council of Boston, intimating for a reason, that a refusal of General Howe to give up General Lee for six field-officers, of whom I was one, and the placing of that gentleman under the charge of the Provost at New York, were the motives of their particular ill treatment to me." He then proceeds to give a description of the place in which he is confined, which, if true, is shocking to humanity, and not to be justified upon the most strict interpretation of the Resolve of Congress, which is as follows; "Should the proffered exchange of General Lee, for six Hessian field-officers, not be accepted, and the treatment of him as abovementioned be continued, then the principles of retaliation shall occasion five of the said Hessian field-officers, together with Lieutenant-Colonel Archibald Campbell, or any other officers that are or may be in our possession, equivalent in number or quality, to be detained, in order that the *same treatment*, which General Lee shall receive, may be *exactly* inflicted upon their persons."† By this you will observe, that *exactly the same treatment* is to be shown to Colonel Campbell and the Hessian officers, that General Howe shows to General Lee; and, as he is only confined to a commodious house, with genteel accommodations, we have no right or reason to be more severe upon Colonel Camp-

* Colonel Campbell had been taken prisoner in Boston harbour on board a transport, in June, 1776. See Vol. III. p. 432.

† See *Journals of Congress, January 6th*, 1777.

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bell, who I would wish should immediately upon the receipt of this be removed from his present situation, and put into a house where he may live comfortably.

Colonel Campbell mentions the case of Captain John Walker, of Colonel Gorham's corps, who, he says, is confined in the same gaol and in the apartment with the common men. I know not what crime is alleged against Captain Walker; but, I will only observe, that, unless there is a very good foundation, such treatment is impolitic, for the enemy have three hundred of our officers, whom we have little chance of exchanging, and upon whom they may retaliate.

Before I had closed my letter, I was honored with your favors of the 11th and 13th instant. Nothing distresses me more, than the universal call that is upon me from all quarters for fire-arms, which I am totally unable to supply. The scandalous loss, waste, and private appropriation of public arms, during the last campaign, are beyond all conception. Every State must exert itself, and call upon its colonels to produce receipts, or to account for the arms, that were delivered out to them last year. I beg you will not only do this, but purchase all, fit for the field, that can be procured from private persons, of which there must be a vast number in the government. I am, &c.

P. S. I omitted to mention above, that the commissions of all the officers, upon the new establishment, are to bear date upon the 1st of January, 1777, and the precedency to be settled by a board of officers.* I desire, for particular reasons, that the contents of the

* General Washington was authorized by Congress to settle any disputes in the army respecting rank. — *Journals, February 12th*, 1777. But, notwithstanding this power, it was his custom to refer all cases of this sort to the decision of a board of officers.

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above letter may not be suffered to go beyond the Council for the present. Colonel Campbell's confinement may be enlarged without assigning the reasons publicly.*

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL CAMPBELL.

Morristown, 1 March, 1777.

SIR,

I last night received the favor of your letter, and am much obliged by the opinion you are pleased to entertain of me. I am not invested with the powers you suppose; and it is as incompatible with my authority, as my inclination, to contravene any determinations, which Congress may make. But as it does not appear to me, that your present treatment is required by any resolution of theirs, but is the result of misconception, I have written my opinion of the matter to Colonel Bowdoin,† which, I imagine, will procure a mitigation of what you now suffer. I have also requested, that inquiry be made into the case of Captain Walker, and proper steps taken to remove all just cause of complaint concerning him. I shall always be happy to manifest my disinclination to any undue severities towards those, whom the fortune of war may chance to throw into my hands. I am, &c.

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* At the same time that Colonel Campbell wrote to General Washington, he also sent a long letter to Sir William Howe, which was forwarded through the hands of the Council of Massachusetts, and in which he described his situation in very expressive language. He acknowledges having received kind and proper treatment till the resolve of Congress for retaliation, but gives a revolting picture of his condition in Concord gaol. See his letter in the *Remembrancer*, Vol. V. p. 138. Colonel Campbell was a member of Parliament for Dunfermline in Scotland.

† President of the Council of Massachusetts.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 1 March, 1777.

SIR,

I was this evening honored with your favor of the 23d ultimo, accompanied by sundry proceedings of Congress. Those respecting General Lee, which prescribe the treatment of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the five Hessian field-officers, are the cause of this letter.* Though I sincerely commiserate the misfortunes of General Lee, and feel much for his present unhappy situation, yet, with all possible deference to the opinion of Congress, I fear that these resolutions will not have the desired effect, are founded in impolicy, and will, if adhered to, produce consequences of an extensive and melancholy nature. Retaliation is certainly just, and sometimes necessary, even where attended with the severest penalties; but, when the evils which may and must result from it exceed those intended to be redressed, prudence and policy require that it should be avoided. Having premised thus much, I beg leave to examine the justice and expediency of it in the instances now before us.

From the best information I have been able to obtain, General Lee's usage has not been so disgraceful and dishonorable as to authorize the treatment decreed to those gentlemen, were it not prohibited by many other important considerations. His confinement, I believe, has been more rigorous than has been generally ex-

* "Resolved, that the Board of War be directed immediately to order the five Hessian field-officers and Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell into safe and close custody, it being the unalterable resolution of Congress to retaliate on them the same punishment, as may be inflicted on the person of General Lee."—*Journal, February 20th.* Congress assigned, as a reason for this resolve, the letter from General Howe to General Washington, dated January 23d. See APPENDIX, No. XIII.

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perienced by the rest of our officers, or those of the enemy, who have been in our possession; but, if the reports received on that head be true, he has been provided with a decent apartment, and with most things necessary to render him comfortable. This is not the case with one of the officers comprehended in the resolves, if his letter, of which a copy is transmitted, deserves your credit. Here retaliation seems to have been prematurely begun; or, to speak with more propriety, severities have been and are exercised towards Colonel Campbell, not justified by any that General Lee has yet received.

In point of policy, under the present situation of our affairs, this doctrine cannot be supported. The balance of prisoners is greatly against us; and a general regard to the happiness of the whole should mark our conduct. Can we imagine, that our enemies will not mete the same punishments, the same indignities, the same cruelties, to those belonging to us, in their possession, that we impose on theirs in our power? Why should we suppose them to possess more humanity than we have ourselves? Or why should an ineffectual attempt to relieve the distresses of one brave, unfortunate man, involve many more in the same calamities? However disagreeable the fact may be, the enemy at this time have in their power, and subject to their call, near three hundred officers belonging to the army of the United States. In this number there are some of high rank; and most of them are men of bravery and of merit. The quota of theirs in our hands bears no proportion, being not more than fifty at most. Under these circumstances, we should certainly do no act to draw upon the gentlemen belonging to us, and who have already suffered a long captivity, greater punishments than they have experienced and now experience. If we should,

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what will their feelings be, and those of their numerous and extensive connexions? Suppose the treatment prescribed for the Hessians should be pursued, will it not establish what the enemy have been aiming to effect by every artifice and the grossest misrepresentations, I mean, an opinion of our enmity towards them, and of the cruel conduct they experience when they fall into our hands, a prejudice which we on our part have heretofore thought it politic to suppress and to root out by every act of lenity and of kindness? It certainly will. The Hessians would hear of the punishment with all the circumstances of heightened exaggeration, would feel the injury, without investigating the cause, or reasoning upon the justice or necessity of it. The mischiefs, which may and must inevitably flow from the execution of the resolves, appear to be endless and innumerable.

On my own part, I have been much embarrassed on the subject of exchanges already. Applications are daily made, by both friends and enemies, to complete them as far as circumstances of number and rank will apply. Some of the former have complained, that a discrimination is about to be adopted, perhaps injurious to their reputation, and certainly depriving them of their right of exchange in due course, as established upon the principles of equality proposed last year, acceded to by both parties, and now subsisting. The latter charge me with a breach of faith, and call on me to perform the agreement.

Many more objections might be subjoined, were they material. I shall only observe, that the present state of our army, if it deserves that name, will not authorize the language of retaliation, or the style of menace. This will be conceded by all, who know that the whole of our force is weak and trifling, and composed of militia (very few regular troops excepted), whose ser-

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vice is on the eve of expiring. There are several other matters, which might be mentioned upon this subject, would time and opportunity permit; but as they will not, I beg leave to refer you to Colonel Walker, who will deliver this, and give satisfaction to any inquiries that may be deemed necessary. Persuading myself that Congress will indulge the liberty I have taken upon this occasion, I have only to wish for the result of their deliberations after they have reconsidered the resolves, and to assure them that I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO THE CONVENTION OF NEW YORK.

Morristown, 1 March, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

During the last campaign, the greatest part of the army were, at a considerable Continental expense, well armed; from whence I had hopes, that in arming our new one, no very great difficulty would obstruct us. But, in opposition to all my orders, and notwithstanding my utmost vigilance, most of the regiments, going off at different times, from different places, and under different

* On the main subject of this letter, Congress resolved, "That General Washington be informed, that Congress cannot agree to any alteration in the resolve passed on the 6th of January; and, as to the complaints of Colonel Campbell, it was never their intention that he should suffer any other hardship, than such confinement as is necessary to his security for the purpose of that resolve."—*Journals, March 14th.* In communicating this resolve, the President of Congress observed;—"The obvious distinction made by General Howe in his treatment of General Lee, who is notoriously committed to the custody of the provost, and denied his parole, while our other officers are admitted to it, was the ground on which Congress proceeded when they passed that resolve (of January 6th), the intention of which was to show, that in proportion as severities against him were increased, the same treatment should be exercised on six field-officers."—*Letter, March 17th.*

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circumstances, took off with them many public arms that were put into their hands. These, no doubt, are still in possession of the individuals, who bore them away; and may, I should suppose, with little expense and some activity in the officers, aided by the supreme civil power in each State, be regained to the public. Unless some such step as this is adopted and attended with success, I fear we shall not be able to furnish a sufficient number for our soldiers. Satisfactory answers to my repeated applications on this subject I have not yet been favored with by Congress, so that I am still a stranger to the resources they have. It therefore behoves each State, in addition to my endeavours, to exert its most unwearied activity in arming its quota, before they march for the field. Our situation and prospects compel me to call your attention, in the most pressing manner, towards expediting the recruiting and equipping of your battalions.*

I have the honor to be, Gentlemen, &c.

TO ROBERT MORRIS.

Morristown, 2 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The freedom, with which you have communicated your sentiments on several matters is highly pleasing

* The embarrassment about fire-arms, which threatened to be serious and alarming, was happily relieved by the arrival of two vessels from France in the month of March; one at Portsmouth, in New Hampshire, with a cargo of about twelve thousand fusees, one thousand barrels of powder, blankets, and military stores on account of the United States; and the other at Philadelphia, with eleven thousand fusees, of which six thousand belonged to the United States, and the remainder were purchased by Congress for the public service. This fortunate supply, added to those already in use, was enough to equip the whole army for the ap-

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to me. For be assured, that nothing would add more to my satisfaction, than an unreserved correspondence with a gentleman of whose abilities and attachment to the cause we are contending for, I entertain so high an opinion as I do of yours. Letters, however, being liable to various accidents, make a communication of thoughts that way rather unsafe. But, as this will be conveyed by a gentleman on whom I can depend, I need not scruple to disclose my mind and situation more freely than I otherwise should do.*

The reasons, my good Sir, which you assign for thinking General Howe cannot move forward with his army are good, but not conclusive. It is a descriptive evidence of the difficulties he has to contend with, but no proof that they cannot be surmounted. It is a view of one side of the picture, against which let me enumerate the advantages on the other, and then determine how we would act in his situation. General Howe cannot, by the best intelligence I have been able to get, have less than ten thousand men in the Jerseys and on

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proaching campaign, and was of the utmost importance. Congress voted that five thousand of the fire-arms brought into Portsmouth should be delivered to the Council of Massachusetts. Three thousand were received by Connecticut, and more than two thousand by New Hampshire.

* This letter was in reply to one, which Mr. Morris had lately written, remarking on a previous letter from General Washington to him, in which the prospects of the future, particularly in regard to the movements and designs of the enemy, were depicted in sombre colors.

"I do not like to be sanguine," observed Mr. Morris, "and yet it is necessary in a contest like this we are engaged in to view the best side of the picture frequently. Remember, good Sir, that few men can keep their feelings to themselves, and that it is necessary for example's sake, that all leaders should feel and think boldly in order to inspirit others, who look up to them. Heaven, no doubt for the noblest purposes, has blessed you with a firmness of mind, steadiness of countenance, and patience in sufferings, that give you infinite advantages over other men. This being the case, you are not to depend on other people's exertions being equal to your own. One mind feeds and thrives on misfortunes by finding resources to get the better of them; another sinks under their

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board of transports at Amboy. Our number does not exceed four thousand. His are well disciplined, well officered, and well appointed. Ours raw militia, badly officered, and under no government. His numbers cannot, in any short time, be augmented. Ours must be very considerably, and by such troops as we can have some reliance upon, or the game is at an end. His situation with respect to horses and forage is bad, very bad, I believe; but will it be better? No; on the contrary worse, and therefore an inducement, if no other, to shift quarters. General Howe's informants are too numerous, and too well acquainted with all these circumstances, to suffer him to remain in ignorance of them. With what propriety, then, can he miss so favorable an opportunity of striking a capital stroke against a city, from whence we derive so many

weight, thinking it impossible to resist; and, as the latter description probably includes the majority of mankind, we must be cautious of alarming them.

"I hate deception, and cannot wish any thing like it should ever escape you; but I really think if the bright side of our affairs were sometimes to be painted by your pen, or sanctified by your name, it would draw forth the exertions of some good men sooner than distress does from others. I hope you will excuse me for this style of writing, which almost amounts to confidential; and, were I sure of such being received in the same light in which I write it, I should lament to you the absence of many great, good, and valuable men from Congress; for, if great care is not taken, that body, so respectable from the nature of the appointment, the importance of its objects, and the respectable characters of its heretofore individual members, will lose great part of its weight and consequence in the eyes of our own people. We have now to lament the absence, from the public councils of America, of Johnson, Jay, R. R. Livingston, Duane, Deane, W. Livingston, Franklin, Dickinson, Harrison, Nelson, Hooper, Rutledge, and others not less conspicuous, without any proper appointments to fill their places, and this at the very time they are most wanted, or would be so, if they had not very wisely supplied the deficiency by delegating to your Excellency certain powers, that they durst not have entrusted to any other man. But what is to become of America and its cause, if a constant fluctuation is to take place among its counsellors, and at every change we find reason to view it with regret?"—*Letter, February 27th.*

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advantages, the carrying of which would give such eclat to his arms, and strike such a damp upon ours? Nor is his difficulty of moving so great as is imagined. All the heavy baggage of the army, their salt provisions, flour, and their stores, might go round by water; whilst their superior numbers would enable them to make a sweep of the horses for many miles around them, not already taken off by us.

In addition to all this, his coming himself to Brunswic, his bringing troops which cannot be quartered, and keeping them on shipboard at Amboy, with some other corroborating circumstances, did induce a firm belief in me, that he would move, and towards Philadelphia. I candidly own, that I expected it would happen before the expiration of my proclamation. The longer it is delayed, the better for us, and happy shall I be, if I am deceived. My opinions upon these several matters are only known to those, who have a right to be informed. As much as possible I have endeavoured to conceal them from every one else; and, that no hasty removal of the public stores should take place, thereby communicating an alarm, I early recommended this measure, and have since been urging it, well knowing that a measure of this kind, set hastily about, when the enemy were advancing, would give unfavorable impressions, and be attended with bad consequences. To deceive Congress, or you, through whose hands my letters to them are to pass, with false appearances and assurances, would, in my judgment, be criminal, and make me responsible for the consequences. I endeavour, in all these letters, to state matters as they appear to my judgment, without adding to or diminishing aught from the picture. From others my sentiments are hidden.

I wish, with all my heart, that Congress had gratified General Lee in his request. If not too late, I wish

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they would do it still. I can see no possible evil that can result from it; some good I think might. The request to see a gentleman or two came from the *General*, not from the *Commissioners;* there could have been no harm, therefore, in hearing what *he* had to say on *any* subject, especially as he had declared, that his own personal interest was deeply concerned. The resolve to put in close confinement Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers, in order to retaliate upon them General Lee's punishment, is, in my opinion, injurious in every point of view, and must have been entered into without due attention to the consequences. Does Congress know how much the balance of prisoners is against us; that the enemy have, at least, three hundred officers of ours in their possession, and we not fifty of theirs; that Generals Thompson and Waterbury are subject to be recalled at any time? Do they imagine that these officers will not share the fate of Campbell? Or, possibly, by receiving very different treatment, mixed with artful insinuations, their resentment may be roused to acts highly injurious to our cause. It is much easier to raise a ferment of this kind than to allay it. Do they know that every artifice is now practising to prepossess the Hessians with an idea of our mal-treatment of their countrymen in our possession; that we are treating them as slaves; nay, that we mean to sell them? And will not the close confinement of their first officers be adduced as strong evidence of this? Congress therefore should be cautious how they adopt measures, which cannot be carried into execution without involving a train of evils, that may be fatal in their consequences. In a word, common prudence dictates the necessity of duly attending to the circumstances of both armies, before the style of conquerors is assumed by either; and sorry I am to

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add, that this does not appear to be the case with us; nor is it in my power to make Congress fully sensible of the real situation of our affairs, and that it is with difficulty, if I may use the expression, that I can, by every means in my power, keep the life and soul of this army together. In a word, when they are at ā distance, they think it is but to say, *Presto begone*, and every thing is done. They seem not to have any conception of the difficulty and perplexity attending those, who are to execute. Indeed, Sir, your observations on the want of many capital characters in that senate are but too just. However, our cause is good, and I hope Providence will support it.

If the resolve of Congress, respecting General Lee, strikes you in the same point of view it has done me, I could wish you would signify as much to that body, as I really think it is fraught with every evil. We know that a meeting of a Committee of Congress and Lord Howe stopped the mouths of many disaffected people. I believe the meeting solicited by General Lee would have the same effect.* But the other matter, relative to the confinement of the officers, is what I am particularly anxious about, as I think it will involve much more than Congress have any idea of, and that they surely will repent adhering to their unalterable resolution.

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* Mr. Morris accorded in opinion with General Washington on this point. He said in reply; — "I wish with you, that they had complied with General Lee's request, and when I sent forward those despatches to Baltimore, I wrote my sentiments to some of the members. I must hint to you what I take to be one of the most forcible arguments, that has been used in Congress against this measure. I have not heard that it was used, but it occurred to me on reading General Lee's letters; I mean the effect it might have at the court of France, should they hear, as they undoubtedly would, that members of Congress visited General Lee by permission of the British Commissioners. The meeting with Lord Howe at Staten Island last summer injured Mr. Deane's negotiations much, and retarded supplies intended for us." — *Letter, March 6th.* In a sketch of

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I have written you a much longer letter than I expected to do when I sat down; and yet, if time would permit, I could enlarge greatly on the subject of it; but, at present, shall beg pardon for taking up so much of your time, and only assure you that I am, most sincerely, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Morristown, 3 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I must recall your attention to what I have before said on the subject of your intended attack. You must be sensible, that the most serious ill consequences may and would probably result from it, in case of failure; and prudence dictates, that it should be cautiously examined in all its points before it is attempted. Unless your strength and circumstances be such, that you can reasonably promise yourself a *moral certainty* of succeeding, I would have you by all means relinquish the undertaking, and confine yourself, in the main, to a defensive opposition. We have lately had several promotions to the rank of major-general, and I am at a loss whether you have had a preceding appointment, as the newspapers announce, or whether you have been omitted through some mistake. Should the latter be the case, I beg you will not take any hasty steps in consequence

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the debate of Congress on this subject, which I have seen, the same argument was used to prove that the step was impolitic; and it was moreover said to be degrading, as Lord and General Howe could have no powers to treat of conciliation, except what they had derived from Parliament, which were known to extend only to receiving submissions and granting pardon. To send a committee to meet them under such circumstances, or to listen to their proposals through General Lee, was deemed inconsistent with the dignity of Congress.

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of it, but allow proper time for recollection, which I flatter myself will remedy any error, that may have been made. My endeavours to that end shall not be wanting, as I am, with great respect, dear Sir, yours, &c.*

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL ANDREW LEWIS.

Morristown, 3 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I was much disappointed at not perceiving your name in the list of major-generals lately made by Congress, and most sincerely wish that the neglect may not induce you to abandon the service. Let me beseech you to reflect, that the period is now arrived, when our most vigorous exertions are wanted, when it is highly and indispensably necessary for gentlemen of abilities in any line, but more especially in the military, not to

* In the list of promotions on the 19th of February, Congress had entirely omitted Brigadier-General Arnold, and raised five junior officers over him to the rank of major-general. This measure was deeply regretted by Washington, who valued highly the military abilities of Arnold, and who considered the good of the service to require a strict regard to the customary rewards for professional merit. Viewed in relation to the career of Arnold at a later period, it may be curious to see his remarks on this first public testimony of disapprobation of his character and conduct.

"I am greatly obliged to your Excellency," he wrote to General Washington, "for interesting yourself so much in my behalf in respect to my appointment, which I have had no advice of, and know not by what means it was announced in the papers. I believe none but the printer has a mistake to rectify. Congress undoubtedly have a right of promoting those, whom, from their abilities, and their long and arduous services, they esteem most deserving. Their promoting junior officers to the rank of major-generals, I view as a very civil way of requesting my resignation, as unqualified for the office I hold. My commission was conferred unsolicited, and received with pleasure only as a means of serving my country. With equal pleasure I resign it, when I can no longer serve my country with honor. The person, who, void of the nice feelings of honor, will tamely condescend to give up his right, and retain a commission at the

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withhold themselves from public employment, or suffer any small punctilios to persuade them to retire from their country's service. The cause requires your aid; no one more sincerely wishes it than I do. A candid reflection on the rank you held in the last war, added to a decent respect for the resolve of Congress, "not to be confined in making or promoting general officers to any regular line," to the propriety of which all America submitted, may remove any uneasiness arising in your mind on the score of neglect. Upon my honor I think it ought. A steady perseverance in promoting the public good, and regular discharge of the duties of your office, which in my opinion you can eminently perform, must and will, in the course of the approaching campaign, secure to you the unfeigned thanks of all good men, and obtain from Congress that rank, which perhaps you may think is now your undoubted right. The present

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expense of his reputation, I hold as a disgrace to the army, and unworthy of the glorious cause in which we are engaged. When I entered the service of my country, my character was unimpeached. I have sacrificed my interest, ease, and happiness in her cause. It is rather a misfortune, than a fault, that my exertions have not been crowned with success. I am conscious of the rectitude of my intentions. In justice, therefore, to my own character, and for the satisfaction of my friends, I must request a court of inquiry into my conduct; and, though I sensibly feel the ingratitude of my countrymen, yet every personal injury shall be buried in my zeal for the safety and happiness of my country, in whose cause I have repeatedly fought and bled, and am ready at all times to risk my life. I shall cautiously avoid any hasty step (in consequence of the appointments which have taken place), that may tend to the injury of my country." — *Letter, dated at Providence, March 11th.*

Again, "In my last I intimated to your Excellency the impossibility of my remaining in a disagreeable situation in the army. My being superseded must be viewed as an implicit impeachment of my character. I therefore requested a court of inquiry into my conduct. I believe the time is now at hand, when I can leave this department without any damage to the public interest. When that is the case, I will wait on your Excellency, not doubting my request will be granted, and that I shall be able to acquit myself of every charge, which malice or envy can bring against me." — *March 26th.*

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exigency requiring all the Continental troops to be at and near this place, and consequently a number of general officers to command them, you will please to repair hither, so soon as you can possibly make it convenient. I acknowledge the receipt of several favors from you the last campaign. The multiplicity of business engaging my whole attention, as it prevented my answering them, must plead my excuse. In hopes of seeing you soon, I am, dear Sir, &c.*

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WILLIAM WOODFORD.

Morristown, 3 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

By some resolves of Congress, just come to my hands, I find, as I hoped and expected, your name in the new appointment of brigadiers, but perceived at the same time, that you were named after Muhlenberg and Weedon. The reason assigned for this is your having resigned your former rank in the service of the continent. You may well recollect, my dear Sir, that I strongly advised you against that resignation. I now as strongly recommend your acceptance of the present appointment. You may feel somewhat hurt in having two officers placed before you, though perhaps never to command you, who were inferior in point of rank to you; but remember, that this is a consequence of your own act, and consider what a stake we are contending for. Trifling punctilios should have no influence upon a man's conduct in such a cause, and at such a time as this. If smaller matters do not yield to greater, if trifles, light as air in comparison with what we are con-

* Brigadier-General Lewis resigned his commission in the service, which was accepted by Congress on the 15th of April.

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tending for, can withdraw or withhold gentlemen from service, when our all is at stake and a single cast of the die may turn the tables, what are we to expect? It is not a common contest we are engaged in; every thing valuable to us depends upon the success of it, and the success upon a steady and vigorous exertion. Consider twice, then, before you refuse. In case of acceptance, which I wish and expect, I have to desire that you will repair immediately to head-quarters, as general officers are exceedingly wanted to assist in arranging the new army; at all events let me hear from you as speedily as possible. With great sincerity and truth,

I am, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO LIEUTENANT-COLONEL ROBERT H. HARRISON.

Instructions.

Differences in opinion having arisen between General Howe and myself, respecting the construction of a proposition made on the 30th of July, and acceded to on the 1st of August last, for the exchange of prisoners, whereby it was stipulated, "that officers should be given for officers of equal rank, soldier for soldier, and citizen for citizen;" — for the accommodation of these differences, and to remove any just cause of complaint on the part of the enemy, if such there be, you are to meet any officer, not of inferior rank to yourself, who shall come properly authorized to treat upon the subject, and to adopt such measures, as you shall deem adequate to that end.

Experience having also shown, that the agreement above recited is not sufficiently definite to answer all the salutary purposes intended by it, nor sufficiently

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comprehensive to include all the various cases incident to the state of prisoners, you are hereby vested with full power and authority to devise and conclude upon such improvements, in aid of the same, as shall appear necessary for establishing a regular and explicit mode of exchange, as well with respect to the prisoners, who have been, as to those who shall be hereafter taken; making mutual provision for such an allowance of pay and necessaries, as their comfort and welfare during their captivity may require; and, finally, to treat, determine, and agree upon all matters whatsoever relative to prisoners of war, on the principles of justice and humanity, and conformable to the most civilized customs and usages, for the greater ease, convenience, and security of all captives belonging to the armies under our respective commands; for all which this shall be your sufficient warrant; and your engagements, being mutually interchanged, shall be ratified and confirmed by me. Given under my hand and seal at Head-Quarters in Morristown, this 4th day of March, 1777.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 6 March, 1777.

SIR,

I do myself the honor to transmit to you the enclosed copy of a letter from General Lee, received by a flag on Tuesday last. You will perceive from thence his wishes and expectations of seeing some members of Congress, in consequence of his letter upon that subject. None of the passports which he mentions were sent out, though the letter came by General Howe's permission, as the others did. I should be happy to relieve

* See APPENDIX, No. XIII.

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his anxiety, as far as I can, by sending in Major Morris; but this I cannot do till a safe-conduct is granted.*

The more I consider the resolves respecting Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian officers, the more convinced I am of their impolicy. The proposition made by Congress for the exchange of prisoners, and which by their direction was transmitted to General Howe, was founded on principles of equality in number and in rank. From hence no demand, as a matter of right, can be made of General Lee's releasement for any officer or number of officers of inferior rank; whatever is or might be done in such instance, would be of favor and indulgence. The only cartel, that now subsists, is the one I have mentioned. This, so far as it goes, is a beneficial one; it recognises the rank of our officers, and insures their discharge from captivity whenever we are possessed of a like number belonging to them, and of the same rank. If on our part it should be violated, if it is not observed, surely it will and must cease to be obligatory on General Howe. What consequences may then ensue, I leave to your conjecture. If it be objected, that the above observations, and what I said in my former letter, prove that no treatment received by our officers should be retaliated on theirs, my answer is, that the proportion of officers in their hands is at least six to one in ours. This consideration, supposing we had a right to demand General Lee's liberty, would be of great weight, and sufficient to prevent, in my opinion, the execution of the resolves. I have the honor to be, in haste, your most obedient servant.

* The letter from General Lee purported to be written chiefly to request his aid-de-camp, Major Morris, to visit him in New York; but he also renewed the strong desire, which he had before expressed in a letter to Congress, of having an interview with some of its members, who should be deputed for the purpose.

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TO RICHARD HENRY LEE, IN CONGRESS.

Morristown, 6 March, 1777.

SIR,

I am anxious to know whether General Arnold's non-promotion was owing to accident or design; and the cause of it. Surely a more active, a more spirited, and sensible officer, fills no department in your army. Not seeing him, then, in the list of major-generals, and no mention made of him, has given me uneasiness; as it is not to be presumed, being the oldest brigadier, that he will continue in service under such a slight. I imagine you will lose two or three other very good officers, by promoting yours, or any one's, over them. My public letters will give you the state of matters in this quarter, and my anxiety to be informed of the reason of Arnold's non-promotion gives you the trouble of this letter.

I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Morristown, 6 March, 1777.

SIR,

I flattered myself, that I should never again be under the necessity of trespassing upon the public spirit of your State, by calling upon her for another supply of militia; but, such has been the unaccountable delay in the recruiting of the Continental battalions, chiefly owing to the long time, which unhappily elapsed before the officers were appointed, I see no prospect of keeping the field till the new levies can be brought into it, but by a reinforcement of militia. For want of proper laws in the southern governments, their militia were never well regulated; and since the late troubles, in which

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the old governments have been unhinged, and new ones not yet firmly established, the people have adopted a mode of thinking and acting for themselves. It is owing to this, that, when a summons is issued for militia, those only turn out that please, and they for what time they please, by which means they sometimes set off for their homes in a few days after they join the army. From this state of facts, you will perceive, that I put no great dependence on the militia from the southward, and I must therefore once more entreat you to endeavour to prevail upon two thousand of the militia of your State to march immediately to Peekskill, and there wait for further orders; their time of service to continue at least six weeks after they arrive there.

I am persuaded, from the readiness with which you have ever complied with all my demands, that you will exert yourself, in forwarding the aforementioned number of men, upon my bare request. But I hope you will be convinced of the necessity of the demand, when I tell you in confidence, that, after the 15th of this month, when the time of General Lincoln's militia will expire, I shall be left with the remains of five Virginia regiments, not amounting to more than as many hundred men, and parts of two or three other Continental battalions, all very weak. The remainder of the army will be composed of small parties of militia from this State and Pennsylvania, on which little dependence can be put, as they come and go when they please. I have issued peremptory orders to every colonel in the regular service, to send in what men he has recruited, even if they amount to but one hundred to a regiment. If they will do this, it will make a considerable force in the whole. The enemy must be ignorant of our numbers and situation, or they would never suffer us to remain unmolested; and I almost tax myself with imprudence,

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in committing the secret to paper; not that I distrust you, of whose inviolable attachment I have had so many proofs, but for fear this letter should by any accident fall into other hands, than those for which it is intended.

If your militia should make any objection to coming this way on account of the smallpox, you may assure them, that, if there is the least danger of taking that disorder here, they shall come no farther than Peekskill (I mean those that have not had it), where they may take the places of the Continental Yorkers, whom I am obliged to keep in garrison there, having no other troops to secure the forts and passes upon the North River. I am, &c.

TO WILLIAM DUER.

Morristown, 6 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The slow progress of the recruiting service gives me much concern, as the situation of our affairs requires the most early succours. I was always sensible, that the bounty given by the eastern States would prove extremely injurious; and remonstrated against it so soon as it came to my knowledge. We have long been satisfied, that the enemy were drawing nearly the whole, or at least the main body of their force, into Jersey; and I think they will make a push for Philadelphia, so soon as the roads will allow them to move. They may mean a feint, as you suggest. However, it is more likely that the other is their object. It will be happy for us, if we can be prepared for either event. Lest your apprehensions should prove true, the wheat and flour contiguous to the water should be secured,

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and removed into the more interior part of the State. The holders of it should not demand an unreasonable price, and it will be worthy of the attention of the Convention to examine the matter, and give the commissary and his agents every aid in their power.

I have maturely weighed the proposed expedition to Long Island, and should be happy, if the execution were as practicable, as it appears to be eligible. I am well assured, that many important advantages would be derived from it. But the enemy's force, now collected in this quarter, calling for every possible aid, it cannot be attempted. However, I should think it would be extremely proper for an idea of the sort to be spread with some address and management, which will be greatly favored, if a requisition I have made to Governor Trumbull, for two thousand militia, can be complied with. This I mention to you in confidence, that the hint may be improved so far as your prudence and discretion direct.* I have the honor, &c.

TO GOVERNOR LIVINGSTON.

Morristown, 8 March, 1777.

SIR,

How can an assembly of gentlemen, eye-witnesses of the distresses and inconveniences, which have their

* After General Heath's retreat from Kingsbridge, Mr. Duer had remained in Westchester county, as one of a committee of the New York Convention to devise means for protecting the people near the enemy's lines, and preventing cattle and other supplies from being taken into the city of New York. In a letter to General Washington he had sketched the plan of a descent upon Long Island, and recommended General McDougall, George Clinton, or Arnold, as well suited to conduct such an enterprise. From the best information that could be obtained, Mr. Duer was of opinion that the enemy's force at this time on New York Island did not amount to more than twelve hundred men.

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principal source in the want of a well regulated militia, hesitate to adopt the only remedy that can remove them; and, stranger still, think of a law, that must necessarily add to the accumulated load of confusion? For Heaven's sake, entreat them to lay aside their present opinions; and, waving every other consideration, let the public good be singly attended to. The ease they design their constituents, by composition, must be delusive. Every injurious distinction between the rich and the poor ought to be laid aside now. The enemy cannot remain much longer in their present situation. Their peace, for some days past, indicates preparations to move. When they do, your Assembly may perhaps wish, that their militia were in the field. I have endeavoured to cut off the communication between Bergen and New York, having received intelligence of it a few days ago.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Morristown, 10 March, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I am sorry to find, that General Cadwalader has declined a commission in the Continental service. Although I often wished in secret, that you could be brought to resume the office of adjutant-general, I never even hinted it, because I thought it might be disagreeable to you for the reason, which you yourself mention, "that you commanded last campaign at the second post upon this continent," and that therefore it might be looked upon by you as a degradation. But you cannot conceive the pleasure I feel when you tell me, "that, if it is my desire that you should resume

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your former office, you will with cheerfulness and alacrity proceed to Morristown." Give me leave to return you my sincere thanks for this mark of your attention to a request of mine, which, now you give me an opening, I make, and at the same time assure you, that I look upon your resumption of the office of adjutant-general, as the only means of giving form and regularity to our new army. I shall be glad to receive a line from you, mentioning the time that you will leave Philadelphia, because I intend sending General St. Clair down to take your command.*

I am informed that General Putnam sent to Philadelphia in irons Major Stockton, taken upon the Rariton, and that he continues in strict confinement. I think we ought to avoid putting in practice, what we have so loudly complained of, the cruel treatment of prisoners. I therefore desire, that, if there is a necessity for confinement, it may be made as easy and comfortable as possible to Major Stockton and his officers. This man, I believe, has been very active and mischievous; but we took him in arms, as an officer of the enemy, and by the rules of war we are obliged to treat him as such, and not as a felon. I shall be glad if you will bring with you as exact a return as possible of the number of troops in Philadelphia, and try to form some opinion of the time in which they will be able to come forward. I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

* The President of Congress had written to General Gates on the subject of his discharging again the duties of adjutant-general. In reference to this letter Gates wrote to Washington, "I own I was surprised at the contents, and the more so, as it was not preceded by one on the same subject from your Excellency. Unless it is your earnest desire, that such a measure should directly take place, I would by no means consent to it." He never resumed the office of adjutant-general. On the 25th of March he was directed by Congress to repair immediately to Ticonderoga and take command of the army there.

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TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL WOOSTER.*

Morristown, 11 March, 1777.

SIR,

I was a good deal surprised to find yours of the 2d dated from Rye. Supposing there was a real necessity of your retreating from New Rochelle, you certainly ought to have returned immediately upon the enemy's dropping their design, if they ever had any, of attacking you. All accounts from your quarter complain loudly of this retreat, as a most injudicious step, as it gave fresh spirits to the disaffected, and retarded the removal of forage by the Convention of New York, the very end that your troops were principally intended to answer. As there is now a certainty, that the enemy have drawn the greater part of their force from New York and Long Island, you may safely fall down again towards Kingsbridge, which I desire may be done immediately, and that you may do all in your power to keep the enemy as strictly confined as possible to the Island of New York.

It appears to me, that the fault was more in your officers than in Stanton, for they should not have suffered him to come on shore, farther than was necessary for his business. I therefore desire that he may be allowed to depart with his flag of truce, and told never to return again, without giving proper notice to an officer.† I am, Sir, yours, &c.

* General Wooster had resigned his commission in the Continental army, and was now in command of the Connecticut militia.

† In regard to this affair General Wooster had written, that John Stanton had lately gone into New York, and come back with a flag from General Howe to take a widow lady and her effects into the city. Stanton was permitted to land with his flag, and then he went to New Rochelle, passing through General Wooster's camp on the way. Under these circumstances General Wooster detained him, and wrote to the Commander-in-chief for advice.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Morristown, 12 March, 1777.

SIR,

It is of the greatest importance to the safety of a country involved in a defensive war, to endeavour to draw their troops together at some post at the opening of a campaign, so central to the theatre of war, that they may be sent to the support of any part of the country, which the enemy may direct their motions against. It is a military observation, strongly supported by experience, "that a superior army may fall a sacrifice to an inferior, by an injudicious division." It is impossible, without knowing the enemy's intentions, to guard against every sudden incursion, or give protection to all the inhabitants. Some principal object should be had in view, in taking post, to cover the most important part of the country, instead of dividing our force to give shelter to the whole, to attempt which cannot fail to afford the enemy an opportunity of beating us in detachments. As we are under the necessity of guessing at the enemy's intentions and further operations, the great object of attention ought to be, where the most proper place is, in which to draw our force together from the eastward and westward, to cover the country, prevent the enemy's penetrating, and annoy them in turn, should our strength be equal to the attempt. There is not a State upon the continent, but thinks itself in danger, and scarcely an officer at any one post, but conceives a reinforcement necessary. To comply with the demands of the whole is utterly impossible, and, if attempted, would prove our ruin.

From the enemy's situation in Jersey, collecting their force at Amboy and Brunswic, and from their intentions

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last fall, confirmed by every piece of intelligence we obtain this spring, it scarce admits a doubt, that Philadelphia is the object in view at the opening of this campaign. If this be their aim, it appears to me highly probable, their army being greatly reduced since the commencement of the last campaign, that they will bring round all the troops from Canada to reinforce those here. What serves to confirm me in this opinion is the facility with which a junction can be made this way, the necessity they are under of a reinforcement, and the great security the command of the Lakes gives them against our incursions into Canada. Under these considerations, I cannot help thinking much too large a part of our force is directed to Ticonderoga. Peekskill appears to me a much more proper place, where, if the troops are drawn together, they will be advantageously situated to give support to any of the eastern or middle States. Should the enemy's design be to penetrate the country up the North River, they will be well posted to oppose them; should they attempt to penetrate into New England, they will be well stationed to cover it; if they move westward, the eastern and southern troops can easily form a junction; and, besides, it will oblige the enemy to leave a much stronger garrison at New York. But, even admitting the enemy should pursue their first plan, they will by no means be disadvantageously posted to reinforce Ticonderoga, and cover the country around Albany. I am very sure the operations of this army will in a great degree govern the motions of that in Canada. If this is held at bay, curbed, and confined, the northern army will not dare attempt to penetrate.

It appears to me of great importance to the success of the next campaign, that we should give this army some capital stroke in the early part of the season.

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Nothing can enable me to do this, but a junction of the eastern and southern forces. The recruiting service to the southward has been so protracted, for want of a regular arrangement amongst the recruiting officers, that, with the difficulty of clothing and arming the troops, it must unavoidably be late in the season before a sufficient force can be drawn together to check their progress, without the assistance of a very considerable part of the eastern troops. The ruin of this army is desirable for many reasons. It will free the country from its present distress, and prevent the army in Canada, if it continues there, from making any movements. But above all, should the enemy be coming from England with a strong reinforcement, the destroying of this division of their force will totally ruin their plan of operations for the next campaign, and perhaps discourage them from any further attempts. Suppose the enemy should, contrary to our expectations, and which I cannot help thinking is against all probability, attempt to penetrate the country by the way of the Lakes, the forts being properly garrisoned and supplied with provisions, the cattle and carriages driven off, it will be impossible for them to effect it.

If we should draw a large force together at Ticonderoga, and the enemy make no movements upon the Lakes, but collect their whole strength here, it would be a useless body of troops there, while the service here might suffer an irreparable injury for want of them. The disaffection of Pennsylvania, which I fear is much beyond any thing you have conceived, and the depression of the people of this State, render a strong support necessary to prevent a systematical submission; besides, the loss of Philadelphia would prove a very great injury, as we draw from thence almost all our supplies. It will signify nothing to have our frontiers

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strongly guarded, while the enemy are ranging at large in the heart of the country. For these and many other reasons, that will readily occur to you upon reflection, I have come to a resolution to alter the route of some part of the Massachusetts forces, and to draw eight regiments of them to Peekskill, from whence by water they can soon proceed to Albany if occasion shall require, or move elsewhere, according to circumstances. This measure I have been the more inclined to adopt, as I find part of the New York regiments are gone to Ticonderoga, contrary to my expectation or design.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO THE COUNCIL OF MASSACHUSETTS BAY.

Morristown, 13 March, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

The prospect of a vigorous attack upon Ticonderoga some time past, founded on a supposition that the enemy might pass the Lakes on the ice, induced me to order all the Continental battalions of your State to march, as fast as they were raised, to that post. A reconsideration of their views, founded on a probability too well supported, that they will draw the greater part of their force from Canada by water, as soon as the season will permit, has induced me to countermand so much of that order as respects eight of the battalions, which I have directed General Heath to send to Peekskill.* There remains no doubt with me, or any of the general officers here, of the enemy's determined reso-

* The quota of Massachusetts under the new arrangement of the army was fifteen regiments, or battalions. An order had been sent to General Heath, who was now in Massachusetts, to forward these regiments, as fast as raised, to Ticonderoga.

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lution to take possession of Philadelphia, as soon as the roads become passable for their artillery and wagons. The loss of that city, so eminently useful to the army, must greatly retard our military operations, and will, I fear, injure the cause.

To prevent this, and, at the same time, to be in a situation effectually to oppose any designs they may have upon Ticonderoga, or the eastern States, I have determined to collect a respectable force at Peekskill, with the utmost expedition. It will occur to you, at first sight, that they can secure the passage of the North River, that they must oblige the enemy to leave a strong garrison in New York, lest we regain the possession of it, and, above all, that, a junction of our main force being easily effected, we can take advantage of any circumstances that may occur in the course of the approaching campaign. Having given General Heath particular orders respecting the inoculation of the eight battalions, I will only add, that I am, with great respect, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 14 March, 1777.

Sir,

Could I accomplish the important objects so eagerly wished by Congress, — "confining the enemy within their present quarters, preventing their getting supplies from the country, and totally subduing them before they are reinforced," — I should be happy indeed. But what prospect or hope can there be of my effecting so desirable a work at this time? The enclosed return, to which I solicit the most serious attention of Congress, comprehends the whole force I have in Jersey. It is

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but a handful, and bears no proportion, in the scale of numbers, to that of the enemy. Added to this, the major part is made up of militia. The most sanguine in speculation cannot deem it more than adequate to the least valuable purposes of war. The reinforcements mentioned to be drawn from General Heath were merely ideal; nearly the whole of the eastern troops, who were with him, being here before. They were only engaged till to-day; and to-day they leave the camp. Their service has been of pretty long continuance, and almost the whole of the winter months. What prospect there may be of immediate succours from other quarters, I know not; but from the militia of this State I cannot expect to derive much more aid. Those who are well affected have been so frequently called from their homes, that they are tired out, and almost profess an abhorrence of the service; nor have I heard as yet, that any Continental troops are on their way. I have written to the brigadier-generals in most of the States upon the subject, and also to the colonels, urging them by every motive to exert themselves in filling the regiments, and to forward them on.

I confess, Sir, I feel the most painful anxiety when I reflect on our situation and that of the enemy. Unless the levies arrive soon, we must before long experience some interesting and melancholy event. I believe the enemy have fixed on their object, and the execution will surely be attempted as soon as the roads are passable. The unprepared state, in which we are, favors all their designs; and it is much to be wished, that they may not succeed to their warmest expectations. On recurring to the late promotions of brigadiers, I find the number appointed to be short of what I took the liberty to recommend, and not competent to the exigences of the service, supposing the whole in office

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before, and those lately created, consent to act, which I have reason to believe will not be the case. I shall only beg leave to refer you to my former letters upon this subject, and to assure you, that many disadvantages will result from not having a sufficient number of officers of this rank. We have always been deficient in this instance; and certain I am that the service has been greatly injured by it. The proportion I mentioned was full small, and in my opinion should not be dispensed with. I have the honor to be, &c.

P. S. I fully intended to transmit to you a general return, but I am not able to make it out with precision. However, from the most accurate estimate that I can form, the whole of our numbers in Jersey, fit for duty at this time, is under three thousand. These, nine hundred and eighty-one excepted, are militia, and stand engaged only till the last of this month. The troops under inoculation, including their attendants, amount to about one thousand.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SULLIVAN.

Morristown, 15 March, 1777.

Do not, my dear General Sullivan, torment yourself any longer with imaginary slights, and involve others in the perplexities you feel on that score. No other officer

* Such had been the melancholy and deplorable situation of the army the preceding campaign, particularly in Canada, from the ravages of the smallpox, that very efficient measures had been taken this winter to prevent the disease from spreading among the soldiers. An establishment for inoculation was provided near Morristown for the troops in camp; one at Philadelphia for those coming from the south; another under the direction of General Parsons in Connecticut for the soldiers from that State; and another at Providence.

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of rank, in the whole army, has so often conceived himself neglected, slighted, and ill treated, as you have done, and none I am sure has had less cause than yourself to entertain such ideas. Mere accidents, things which have occurred in the common course of service, have been considered by you as designed affronts. But pray, Sir, in what respect did General Greene's late command at Fort Lee differ from his present command at Baskenridge; or from yours at Chatham? And what kind of separate command had General Putnam at New York? I never heard of any, except his commanding there ten days before my arrival from Boston, and one day after I had left it for Haerlem Heights, as senior officer. In like manner at Philadelphia, how did his command differ from the one he has at Princeton, and wherein does either vary from yours at Chatham? Are there any peculiar emoluments or honors to be reaped in the one case and not in the other? No. Why then these unreasonable, these unjustifiable suspicions? Suspicions, which can answer no other end, than to poison your own happiness, and add vexation to that of others. General Heath, it is true, was ordered to Peekskill, so was General Spencer, by the mere chapter of accidents (being almost in the country), to Providence, to watch the motions of the fleet, then hovering in the Sound. What followed afterwards to either, or both, was more the effect of chance than design.

Your ideas and mine, respecting separate commands, have but little analogy. I know of but one separate command, properly so called, and that is in the Northern Department; and General Sullivan, General St. Clair, or any other general officer at Ticonderoga, will be considered in no other light, whilst there is a superior officer in the department, than if he were placed at

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Chatham, Baskenridge, or Princeton. But I have not time to dwell upon a subject of this kind. I shall quit it with an earnest exhortation, that you will not suffer yourself to be teased with evils, that only exist in the imagination, and with slights, that have no existence at all; keeping in mind, at the same time, that, if distant armies are to be formed, there are several gentlemen before you, in point of rank, who have a right to claim a preference. I am, with regard, dear Sir, your most obedient, &c.

TO JOHN RUTLEDGE, GOVERNOR OF SOUTH CAROLINA.

Morristown, 17 March, 1777.

SIR,

The reduction of St. Augustine being considered an object of infinite importance, I have written to General Howe,* who commands in Georgia, to consult with you and the governor of that State, on the propriety of making an expedition against it. If, on consideration of every circumstance, the measure shall seem practicable, and promise a prospect of success, I flatter myself, and am well assured, that you will cheerfully concur and give General Howe every aid in your power, necessary to the execution of it, in conjunction with the assistance he will derive from Georgia. I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, &c.†

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* General Robert Howe of North Carolina, a brigadier in the Continental service.

† The expedition here suggested was not carried into effect, for various reasons communicated by General Howe, the principal of which was, that the force in South Carolina and Georgia was not sufficient for the purpose. The regular army in South Carolina at this time amounted to two thousand men. The time was nearly expired for which a large part of them had enlisted, and the governor had no power to march the militia out of the State.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Instructions.

SIR,

The necessity of having the Congress well informed of many matters essential to the well-being of this army, and the impracticability of doing this fully by letter, have induced me to request you, who intimately know our circumstances, to repair immediately to Philadelphia for this purpose; and at the same time to ascertain how we are to be supplied with arms, and many other articles, in which we are exceedingly deficient. To enumerate the several matters of information necessary to be given, and the inquiries proper to be made, would be as needless as endless; your own good sense, assisted by such hints as you have received, will be abundantly sufficient.

Two or three things, however, I must in a more particular manner recommend to your attention; one is the embarrassment I am laid under, with respect to carrying the exchange of prisoners into execution agreeably to the cartel settled with General Howe, by order of Congress, on account of the confinement of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers. I would have you inquire of the quarter-master-general, how he stands provided with tents, ammunition-carts, wagons for intrenching tools, and hatchets or tomahawks; also of the commissary of stores, how he proceeds with his casting of cannon and making of cartridges, of which numbers should be in readiness; and in general what forwardness the business of the laboratory is in, and urge him to the most diligent discharge of the duties thereof.

One thing in particular I beg of you to impress strongly upon Congress, and that is, the necessity of

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keeping the paymaster regularly supplied with the article of cash; without it every thing moves slowly, and many and great disadvantages flow from the want of it, as we have most wofully experienced of late in numberless instances. As the establishment of the light-horse, with respect to the pay, seems to be upon an unstable footing, and it is indispensably necessary that both officers and men should know what they have to depend upon, I should be glad if the pay could be settled upon such a just and liberal footing, as to give satisfaction to the parties. Given at Head-Quarters, Morristown, this 18th day of March, 1777.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 18 March, 1777.

SIR,

The difficulty if not impossibility of giving Congress a just idea of our situation (and of several other important matters requiring their earliest attention) by letter, has induced me to prevail on Major-General Greene to wait upon them for that purpose. This gentleman is so much in my confidence, so intimately acquainted with my ideas, with our strength and our weakness, with every thing respecting the army, that I have thought it unnecessary to particularize or prescribe any certain line of duty or inquiries for him. I shall only say, from the rank he holds as an able and good officer in the estimation of all who know him, he deserves the greatest respect; and much regard is due to his opinions in the line of his profession. He has upon his mind such matters, as appear to me most material to be immediately considered; and many more will probably arise during the intercourse you may think proper

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to honor him with; on all which I wish to have the sense of Congress, and the result of such deliberations as may be formed thereupon. I have the honor, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 29 March, 1777.

SIR,

I have not yet obtained a certain account of the expedition against and destruction of Peekskill. Information of those events has not been yet transmitted by General McDougall, nor General Clinton, nor the Convention of the State.* There is no doubt but that the town is destroyed, and with it some stores; neither the quality nor amount of them is known. It is said that it was done in part by our own people, when they found that they could not prevent them from falling into the enemy's hands. The ships and troops have gone down the river again.†

* General George Clinton was appointed by Congress, on the 25th of March, commandant of the forts in the Highlands, with the rank of brigadier-general. On this occasion the Commander-in-chief wrote to him as follows. "I congratulate you most cordially on your late appointment to a command in the Continental army. I assure you it gave me great pleasure when I read the resolve, and I wish that your exertions may be crowned with a suitable success." — *Letter, March 31st.* The appointment had been recommended to Congress by the Convention of New York.

† After the departure of General Heath for Massachusetts, the command at Peekskill devolved on General McDougall. Military stores and provisions to a considerable amount had been collected at that place, which tempted Sir William Howe to project a scheme for destroying them. To prepare the way, an American officer, who had been captured at Fort Washington, was sent out as exchanged, being escorted with a flag to General McDougall's outguards. This officer reported, that the enemy talked publicly of making an excursion into the country, with the design of taking off the forage, and that they intended to effect it by three divisions, one to proceed up the Sound to Mamaronec, another from

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Mr. Kirkland, the Oneida missionary, arrived here this week with a chief warrior and five other Indians of that nation. They had been to Boston, and came from thence to this place to inquire into the true state of matters, that they might report them to a grand council to be shortly held. They said things were so falsely and variously represented by our enemies through their agents, that they did not know what to depend on. I invited them to go to Philadelphia; but they declined it, declaring they were well satisfied with what they had seen, and that they were authorized to tell their nation all they had heard from the enemy was false. Being told that France was assisting us, and about to join in the war, they seemed highly pleased; and Mr. Kirkland said he was persuaded it would have a considerable effect on the minds of several of the nations, and secure to us their neutrality, if not a declaration and commencement of hostilities in our favor. I showed them every civility in my power, and every thing that I thought material to excite in them an idea of our strength and independence. After staying two days,

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Kingsbridge by the centre road, and a third to land at Tarrytown. A conversation of this kind had doubtless been held in the hearing of the officer, that the intelligence thus conveyed by him might draw off the attention of General McDougall from the real point of attack. As he had only two hundred and fifty men at the post, he took no other steps in consequence of this report, than to prepare for removing the stores to places of greater safety at Forts Montgomery and Constitution.

Before this was accomplished, however, nine or ten sail of the enemy's vessels appeared in the North River near Tarrytown, and two of them ascended as high as Teller's Point, twelve miles below Peekskill, on the evening of the 22d of March. The next morning at nine o'clock the whole fleet was under sail, and at twelve they anchored in the bay at Peekskill, consisting of the Brune frigate, two ships and two brigs, three galleys, and four transports, with some small craft, the whole under the command of Colonel Bird. At one o'clock about five hundred men in eight flat-boats landed at Lent's Cove, on the south side of the bay, having four pieces of light artillery drawn by the sailors. This force being double that under General McDougall, he retreated to the hills beyond the

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they set off for their nation, expressing their desire of the most speedy return to the council, and professing the most friendly sentiments towards us.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO COLONEL TIMOTHY PICKERING.

Morristown, 30 March, 1777.

SIR,

The office of adjutant-general being vacant, by the resignation of Colonel Reed, and the power of appointing a successor resting with me, I am induced, from the good opinion I entertain of your attachment to the interest of the United States and your military character, not only to make a tender, but most heartily to wish your acceptance of it. It will give me much pleasure if the offer meets your concurrence; and, if it should, I must request that you will lose no time in repairing to head-quarters; the arrangements of the new army and the good of the service requiring that

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town towards the Highlands, giving directions for destroying such stores as could not be removed. At the same time he sent orders to Lieutenant-Colonel Willett to leave a subaltern's command at Fort Constitution, and march a detachment to his assistance. The British kept possession of the town till the next day, when it was found that a party had advanced to a high ground flanked by a wood. Here they were attacked by Colonel Willettin the afternoon, and a smart skirmish ensued. The party retreated to the main body, and in the evening, favored by the light of the moon, they all embarked, and sailed down the river. Nine of the enemy were killed and wounded in the skirmish with Willett, and four were killed at the creek while attempting to burn the boats. The Americans had one man mortally wounded by a cannon-shot. The loss of provisions and stores was considerable, and the principal object of the enemy was effected. — *General McDougall's MS. Letter, March 29th. — Sir William Howe's Letter to Lord George Germain, April 1st.* General Washington expressed his full approbation of General McDougall's conduct, and wrote to Congress, that he conceived every prudent step had been taken, and as good a disposition made as the small number of troops would admit.

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the post should be immediately filled. The pay I presume you are acquainted with; but, lest you should not be, I think proper to mention, that it is a hundred and twenty-five dollars a month. Should circumstances put it out of your power to accept the appointment, an event I hope not to happen, and which would give me concern, you will be pleased to send the express with the enclosed letter to Colonel William Lee; otherwise you will retain and return it to me upon your arrival, which I trust will be in a few days.

I am, Sir, yours, &c.*

TO ELIAS BOUDINOT.

Morristown, 1 April, 1777.

SIR,

I am authorized by Congress to appoint a commissary of prisoners. The pay will, I expect, be about sixty dollars a month; the duty, except as to confinement, not hard, at least after the business is once put into a proper train. Close attendance on the army will be requisite, in order to receive and distribute the prisoners to places assigned for their confinement, at each of which some person should be stationed to see that they are taken care of, that they receive what is allowed them, and that proper accounts are kept of the expenses. The most troublesome part of this office will be to obtain accounts of the expenses already in-

* Colonel Pickering at first declined the appointment, and forwarded the letter to Colonel Lee. The latter proceeded to head-quarters, but seemed reluctant to accept the office, and in a few days Colonel Pickering changed his mind, and acceded to the proposal. He was then in command of a regiment of militia, but had not been attached to the Continental army. General St. Clair discharged the duties of adjutant-general for some time after the resignation of Colonel Reed.

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curred; for, after this is once done, the business may be put upon such a footing, as to be managed with regularity and ease.

I intend to annex another duty to this office, and that is the procuring of intelligence. The person engaged in the department of commissary of prisoners will have as much leisure, and better opportunities, than most other officers in the army, to obtain knowledge of the enemy's situation, motions, and (as far as may be) designs. Thus, Sir, in concise terms have I given you a sketch of the duties of a commissary of prisoners, and my expectations from him, and now give me leave to ask if you will accept the appointment. With very great esteem and regard, I am, Sir, yours, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LEE.

Morristown, 1 April, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I am to inform you, that Congress, not perceiving that any advantage would be derived, either to yourself or the public interest, from an interview between you and a part of their members, could not consider themselves at liberty to comply with your request. At the same time I am to assure you, that every means will be pursued to provide for your safety, and the attainment of your liberty. This I had in charge when Major Morris was permitted to visit you; but I thought proper to defer the communication of it, for reasons which you would deem satisfactory. The enclosed letters

* Mr. Boudinot accepted the appointment, and was commissioned on the 15th of April. Colonels Hand and Charles Scott were promoted by Congress to the rank of brigadier-general on the 1st of April, and Colonel Learned the next day. General Armstrong resigned on the 4th.

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came when Congress transmitted the result of your applications. That from Mr. Morris contains sundry bills of exchange, the detention of which I hope has not subjected you to the least possible inconvenience. I am, dear Sir, with great regard and esteem, your most obedient servant.

TO THE PENNSYLVANIA BOARD OF WAR.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 2 April, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

I have to lament, that the expressions intended to thank the late Council of Safety for easing me of a part of the heavy load I bear in forming our army could be so misunderstood by your Board. I rejoiced at hearing, that they had not only appointed their officers in the first instance, but arranged them likewise, and desired that in future I should fill up the vacancies as they happen, intending thereby to save you the trouble and prevent delays.*

On being apprized of the plot you speak of, I ordered Collins in to the provost, and shall immediately send him to Philadelphia, that he may be ready for trial when called for. Enclosed is his examination, taken by one of my aids-de-camp. I have established a relay

* The expressions referred to were contained in a letter to the Council of Safety, dated March 28th, as follows. "By the late powers granted to me by Congress, I had a right to fill up all commissions under the rank of brigadier-general; but, as I thought the Conventions, Assemblies, or Councils of Safety, of the different States, were best acquainted with the persons proper to fill the necessary appointments, I was pleased to see that you had completed your arrangements yourselves in the first instance. In order to prevent the inconveniences and delays, that may arise from any vacancies, that may happen in future, remaining unfilled, I shall take the liberty to make the appointments, always taking care to pay a due regard to seniority where merit is equal."

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of riders between this and Philadelphia, and have ordered Colonel Biddle to acquaint you with the rider's name, and where he may be found in Philadelphia. Intelligence will be secure and expeditious. I have received certain and authentic intelligence, that all the top-sail vessels have left Amboy, and are riding off the watering-place. Report says, that they are taking in fourteen days' wood and water. I should be happy to be informed of their appearance, if within your Capes,* as soon as possible, that I may regulate myself accordingly. I have the honor, &c.

TO GOVERNOR COOKE.

Morristown, 3 April, 1777.

SIR,

The late ample arrivals of arms at Philadelphia and at Portsmouth, added to those we before had, puts me out of all further uneasiness on account of that necessary article. The eleven hundred and seventy-six stands, which you received from the Continental agent at Boston, will be very near the number wanted for your two Continental battalions when complete; and I desire that they may be carefully collected from the militia, to whom any part of them were lent, and applied to that purpose. The effects of granting extravagant bounties, and of raising bodies of men upon colonial establishments, now appear, from the returns of the low state of your Continental battalions. From the first cause, the men are taught to set a price upon themselves, and refuse to turn out, except that price be paid; and I am informed in some instances, in Massachusetts, one

* The Capes of Delaware.

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hundred pounds lawful money per man have been paid. It is also evident, that the raising of the colonial brigade for fifteen months retards the Continental enlistments; for General Spencer in a letter of the 26th of March writes to me, that the first has five hundred men, and the last but three hundred and eighty, about half of whom have had the smallpox; and he adds, that General Varnum was only then preparing hospitals for the inoculation of the remainder. Strange that this should have been neglected so long, when my orders were given to him on the 3d of March, to provide quarters and to inoculate immediately.

You certainly overrate the number of men upon Rhode Island, if they consist of only six Hessian and two British regiments. The Hessian regiments, when they came out complete, did not exceed six hundred men each, and the British two hundred and fifty each. Now, if they have decreased by casualties in proportion to the other troops in the British army, they are scarcely more than three thousand; a number too small to make any attempt upon the main. I am convinced, from every appearance, that they intend to leave Rhode Island, where they have wintered comfortably, and kept up a considerable diversion, and join their main body in this State. How I am to oppose them, God knows; for, excepting a few hundred from Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, I have not yet received a man of the new Continental levies. So far, therefore, from being able to consent, that your Continental battalions should remain at home, supposing the enemy should continue upon the Island, that I am obliged, in the most positive terms, to order every man, who has had the smallpox, to come immediately forward, and those who have not, so soon as they are recovered. I have written to General Varnum to the same effect.

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As it is my duty to afford equal protection to every part of the continent, you may be assured, if I thought there was any real danger to be apprehended from the enemy at Rhode Island, that, instead of drawing the Continental troops from that quarter, I would add to their numbers. But, when there is every probability of their coming away, and, supposing they should stay, as the internal strength of the country would hinder them from setting foot upon the main, I think I am excusable in drawing every man in the Continental service (excepting those intended for the northern department) to this point, to make opposition to the grand army of the enemy, who, unless they are checked, will, in turn, overrun every State in the Union.

As the safety of the whole confederacy depends upon each State's furnishing the quota of men allotted to it, I must call upon you in the most pressing manner to endeavour to complete your allotment by the usual methods; but, if your men will not turn out voluntarily, notwithstanding the great encouragement given by the State, I beg you will, if your powers are adequate, insist upon each district's furnishing a certain number, as they have done in Massachusetts. If neither of these modes can be fallen upon, to good effect, we may as well give up the cause.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Morristown, 3 April, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

It is needless for me to say much upon a subject, which must undoubtedly give you a good deal of uneasiness. I confess I was surprised when I did not

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see your name in the list of major-generals, and was so fully of opinion, that there was some mistake in the matter, that, as you may recollect, I desired you not to take any hasty step, before the intention of Congress was fully known. The point does not now admit of a doubt, and is of so delicate a nature, that I will not even undertake to advise. Your own feelings must be your guide. As no particular charge is alleged against you, I do not see upon what ground you can demand a court of inquiry. Besides, public bodies are not amenable for their actions. They place and displace at pleasure; and all the satisfaction that an individual can obtain, when he is overlooked, is, if innocent, a consciousness that he has not deserved such treatment for his honest exertions. Your determination not to quit your present command, while any danger to the public might ensue from your leaving it, deserves my thanks, and justly entitles you to the thanks of your country.

General Greene, who has lately been at Philadelphia, took occasion to inquire upon what principle the Congress proceeded in their late promotion of general officers. He was informed, that the members from each State seemed to insist upon having a proportion of general officers, adequate to the number of men which they furnish, and that, as Connecticut had already two major-generals, it was their full share. I confess this is a strange mode of reasoning; but it may serve to show you, that the promotion, which was due to your seniority, was not overlooked for want of merit in you.*

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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* Arnold seems to have been so far influenced by this letter, as not to insist on a court of inquiry; and perhaps he had other reasons for not wishing to urge such a step with too much earnestness.

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PROCLAMATION RESPECTING DESERTERS.

Whereas many soldiers, lately enlisted in the Continental army, not content with the generous bounties and encouragements granted to them by Congress, but influenced by a base regard to their interest, have reenlisted with and received bounties from other officers, and then deserted; and whereas it is presumed, that many, fully sensible of the enormity of their crimes, would return to their duty, were they not deterred by an apprehension of suffering the severe punishment lately inflicted on those found guilty of desertion; I have thought proper to issue this my proclamation, offering free pardon to all those above described, as well as to those who have deserted from other motives, who shall voluntarily surrender themselves to any officer in the Continental army, or join their respective corps before the 15th day of May next. And I do strictly enjoin all officers in the army under my command, and entreat the good people of these States, to use their utmost endeavours to apprehend and secure such deserters, as shall not avail themselves of the indulgence offered by this proclamation. Given under my hand at Head-Quarters, at Morristown, this 6th day of April, 1777.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Morristown, 7 April, 1777.

SIR,

The pay abstract of the tenth regiment of Connecticut militia, from October to January last, was this day presented to me for payment. The very unreasonable disproportion of officers induced me to decline giving

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orders for the payment. I must beg the favor of you to have some mode adopted, by which the public treasury may be eased of such extraordinary demands. Impositions of this nature are provided for in future by Congress; but how we are to remedy those, which have happened, I am at a loss to determine. I can only say, that nothing shall pass through my hands, that may be construed into the slightest approbation of such impositions. I have enclosed the abstract for your consideration. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Morristown, 9 April, 1777.

SIR,

I take the liberty of transmitting to you a copy of a paper addressed to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott of your army, which came enclosed in a letter from Lieutenant-General Lord Cornwallis. It is with peculiar regret, I am constrained to observe, that this illiberal performance of Colonel Walcott's is obviously calculated to answer a less generous purpose, than that of merely effecting an exchange, contains a gross misrepresentation of facts, and is a palpable deviation from that delicate line, which I expected would mark his conduct, as a man of candor and ingenuousness.* That

* In consequence of General Howe's suggestion, that some person should be appointed by General Washington to meet a British officer for the purpose of settling the differences, that existed in regard to the exchange of prisoners, Colonel Harrison had been selected for this purpose, and received his powers and instructions on the 4th of March. A meeting took place between him and Colonel Walcott, the British commissioner. It proved ineffectual as to the points at issue; and there was another meeting on the 2d of April, when, as the parties did not agree, Colonel Walcott presented to Colonel Harrison a paper, which the

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gentleman has censured two articles insisted on by me through Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison, at their meeting on the 10th ultimo, "as groundless, unprecedented, and inconsistent with any degree of reason and common sense," though founded, as I conceive, in the clearest principles of equity and justice. Not contenting himself with this, which would have given me no concern, he has assumed the privilege of mutilating and misstating those articles in such a manner, as to change their meaning, and to adapt them to the unfair conclusions he wished to establish.

Having premised these things, and being charged in direct and positive terms by Colonel Walcott, who acted under your authority, with a violation of the agreement made between us for the exchange of prisoners, and called upon for a performance of the same, I think it necessary to explain the motives of my conduct, and the grounds on which those articles or objections stand. In respect to the first, I freely repeat, that I do not hold myself bound, either by the spirit of the agreement, or by the principles of justice, to account for those prisoners, who, from the rigor and severity of their treatment, were in so emaciated and languishing a state, at the time they came out, as to render their death almost certain and inevitable; and which, in many instances, happened while they were returning to their homes, and, in many others, immediately after their arrival.

You must be sensible, that our engagement, as well as all others of the kind, though in the letter it ex-

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latter considered so objectionable in its temper and contents, that he would not receive it, although it was brought prepared, and was hence presumed to have been approved by General Howe. As Colonel Harrison refused to be the bearer of it to General Washington, it was sent out by a flag, under the cover of a letter from Lord Cornwallis.

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presses only an equality of rank and number, as the rule of exchange, yet necessarily implies a regard to the general principles of mutual compensation and advantage. This is inherent in its nature, is the voice of reason, and no stipulation, as to the condition in which prisoners should be returned, was requisite. Humanity dictated that their treatment should be such, as their health and comfort demanded; and, where her laws have been duly respected, their condition has been generally good. Nor is this the language of humanity alone; justice declares the same. The object of every cartel, or similar agreement, is the benefit of the prisoners themselves, and that of the contending powers. On this footing, it equally exacts, that they should be well treated, as well as that they should be exchanged. The reverse is, therefore, an evident infraction, and ought to subject the party, on whom it is chargeable, to all the damage and ill consequences resulting from it. Nor can it be expected, that those unfitted for future service by acts of severity, in direct violation of a compact, are proper subjects for an exchange. In such case, to return others not in the same predicament, would be to give without receiving an equivalent; and would afford the greatest encouragement to cruelty and inhumanity. The argument, drawn from the mere circumstance of the prisoners having been received, is of no validity. Though, from their wretched situation, they could not, at that time, be deemed proper for an exchange, yet our humanity required that they should be permitted to return among us.

It may, perhaps, be fairly doubted, whether an apprehension of their death, or that of a great part of them, did not contribute somewhat to their being sent out when they were. Such an event, whilst they remained with you, would have been truly interesting; because it

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would have destroyed every shadow of claim for a return of the prisoners in our hands; and, therefore, policy, concurring with humanity, dictated that the measure should be adopted. Happy had it been, if the expedient had been thought of before these ill-fated men were reduced to such extremity. It is confessed, however, on all sides, that, after their delivery, they still continued your prisoners, and would be so till regularly exchanged.

I acknowledge, that I should, and I have been always willing, notwithstanding this concession, to account for every man, who was in a proper condition and fit to be exchanged at the time he came out, so far as the proportion of prisoners with us would extend. With what propriety, or upon what foundation of justice, can more be demanded? This has been proposed, or, what is the same, was most clearly implied in the first article or objection made by Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison, and illiberally rejected since, "as inconsistent with any degree of reason or common sense." Painful as it is, I am compelled to consider it as a fact not to be questioned, that the usage of our prisoners, whilst in your possession, of the privates at least, was such as could not be justified. This was proclaimed by the concurrent testimony of all who came out; their appearance sanctioned the assertion; and melancholy experience, in the speedy death of a large part of them, stamped it with infallible certainty.

In respect to the second article insisted on, your discriminating Major-General Lee from other captive officers belonging to the American army demanded my particular attention. I was authorized to conclude, from your laying him under peculiar restraints, and from your letter of the 23d of January last, that you considered him in a singular point of view, and meant

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to exclude him from the right of exchange, stipulated for all officers in general terms. This distinction, the more injurious and unwarrantable, as you never excepted him, though you knew him to be an officer in our army at the time, and long before the agreement was entered into, made it my duty to assert his right in an explicit manner, and to endeavour to put the matter upon so unequivocal a footing, as to insure his enlargement, whenever an officer of equal rank belonging to your army should be in our power. This was attempted by the article, and nothing more; nor is any other inference to be drawn from it. It is true, a proposition has been made, since his captivity, to give a certain number of officers of inferior rank in exchange for him; but it was not claimed as a matter of right. What name, then, does that proceeding merit, by which it is suggested, that the immediate release of General Lee had been demanded, without having an officer of equal rank to give for him? The suggestion cannot be supported by the most tortured exposition, nor will it have credit where candor is deemed a virtue, and words preserve their form and meaning.

As to the charge of delay in not returning the prisoners in our hands, the dispersed situation of those, taken at a more early period of the war, through the different States, arising from the circumstances of their captivity and a regard to their better accommodation, made their detention for a considerable time unavoidable. When the agreement subsisting between us took place, the speediest directions were given to have them collected, that an exchange might be effected. This was done in part, and at a juncture when motives of policy opposed the measure, but were made to yield to the rigid maxims of good faith.* We were pursuing the exchange,

* The following clause was here inserted in the first draft of the letter,

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and continued our exertions to accomplish it, till the miserable appearance of those sent out by you, indicating an approaching catastrophe, made it improper. Foreseeing that a difficulty might arise, and that it might be expected, that I should account for the whole of them, which I by no means thought it equitable to do, it became necessary that the matter should be adjusted, and the due proportion settled for which I ought to be responsible, before any thing further could be done on my part. Upon this ground stands also the detention of those, who have been since captured. Added to these considerations, the discrimination set up in the instance of General Lee is to be regarded as utterly irreconcilable with the tenor of our agreement, and an insurmountable obstacle to a compliance with your demands.

Thus, Sir, have I explained the motives of my conduct, and I trust vindicated myself in the eye of impartiality from the improper and groundless charge, which you and the gentleman acting by your authority have been pleased to allege against me. If, in doing this, I have departed in the smallest degree from that delicacy, which I always wished should form a part of my character, you will remember, that I have been forced into recrimination, and that it has become an act of necessary justice. I shall now declare it to be my ardent wish, that a general exchange may take place, on generous and liberal principles, so far as it can be effected, and that the agreement, subsisting between us for that purpose, should be inviolably observed; and I call upon you, by every obligation of good faith, to

but it was omitted in the transcript sent to General Howe. — "Happily we found an equivalent, so far as their number went, in those returned from Canada, and who had experienced the humanity of General Carleton."

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remove all impediments, on your part, to the accomplishment of it. If, however, you do not, I console myself with a hope, that those unfortunate men, whose lot it is to be your prisoners, will bear their sufferings with becoming fortitude and magnanimity.

I am, Sir, with due respect, &c.*

TO THOMAS JOHNSON, GOVERNOR OF MARYLAND.

Morristown, 11 April, 1777.

Sir,

The latest accounts received respecting the enemy, rendered probable by a variety of circumstances, inform us, that they are very busily engaged in fitting up their transports at Amboy for the accommodation of troops, that they have completed their bridge, and are determined to make their first push at Philadelphia. The campaign is therefore opening; and our present situation, weaker than when you left us, forces me to entreat your utmost attention to the raising and equipping of the Continental troops allotted to be raised in your State. I have waited in painful expectation of reinforcements, such as would probably have insured a happy issue to any attack I might have determined upon, and such as I had a right to expect, had the officers faithfully discharged their duty.

But that time is past, and I must content myself with improving on the future chances of war. Even this cannot be done, unless the officers can be persuaded to abandon their comfortable quarters, and take the field. Let me, therefore, in the most earnest terms beg that they may be forwarded to the army without loss of

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* See the answer in the Appendix, No. XIV.

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time. I have also to ask the favor of you to transmit to me a list of the field-officers of your battalions, and their rank, with the number of their respective battalions. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO JOHN AUGUSTINE WASHINGTON.

Morristown, 12 April, 1777.

DEAR BROTHER,

To my great surprise we are still in a calm. How long it will, how long it can, remain, is beyond my skill to determine. That it has continued much beyond my expectation already, is certain. But, to expect that General Howe will not avail himself of our weak state is, I think, to say in so many words, that he does not know how to take advantage of circumstances, and of course is unfit for the trust reposed in him. From all accounts it appears, that the remaining part of the troops at Rhode Island were preparing to embark; and that Philadelphia is the object I have not myself the smallest doubt. Other opinions do however prevail. A little time will determine the point. For some days past there has been a considerable movement among the enemy's shipping. It seems next to impossible to make our officers in any of the States exert themselves in bringing their men to the field, as if it were a matter of moonshine whether they come to-day, to-morrow, a week, or a month hence. The campaign will be opened without men on our side, unless they come in much faster than I have reason to expect them.

The unfortunate policy of short enlistments is daily and hourly exemplified. Thoroughly convinced I am, that, if the troops, who were enlisted last year, had been engaged for the war, or even three years, I could

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with them, and such aids as might have been drawn to our assistance, have driven the British army and their auxiliary troops out of the Jerseys in the course of last winter. I do not know but they might also have been driven from New York. Instead of that, we have at this late day an army to assemble for self-defence. But past errors cannot be rectified. We must guard as much as possible against future evils. The ridiculous and inconsistent orders given by the executive powers, in some of the States, and even by the officers therein, for the rendezvous of their men, are scarcely to be thought of with patience. It would seem as if to harass the troops and delay their junction were the ends in view.

I am glad to hear that my sister and the little ones are well. I thank her for the trouble she has taken in knitting the stockings you speak of. My love to you all, in which Mrs. Washington, who is now with me, joins. I am your most affectionate brother.

TO PATRICK HENRY, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

Morristown, 18 April, 1777.

SIR,

It gives me much concern to hear, that the recruiting service proceeds so slowly in most of the States. That it is the case in Virginia affects me in a peculiar manner. I feel myself much obliged by the polite respect your honorable Board of Council are pleased to show to my opinion; and am under the necessity of observing, that the volunteer plan, which you mention, will never answer any valuable purposes, and that I cannot but disapprove the measure. To the short engagements of our troops may be fairly and justly ascribed almost

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every misfortune, which we have experienced. By that cause, and that alone, have the liberties of our country been put in question, and the most obvious advantages lost. This I speak from painful experience, and, assured of the facts, I cannot countenance in the smallest degree what I know to be pernicious in the extreme. Short enlistments, when founded on the best plan, are repugnant to order, and subversive of discipline; and men, held upon such terms, will never be equal to the important ends of war; but, when they are of the *volunteer* kind, they are still more destructive.

Those who engage in arms, under that denomination, let them agree upon what conditions they may, are uneasy, impatient of command, ungovernable; and, claiming to themselves a sort of superior merit, generally assume not only the privilege of thinking but of doing as they please; added to these considerations, such corps are long in forming, and half of their time is taken up in marching to and from camp at a most amazing expense; nor are the injuries, to which a country is exposed, by the frequent marching and countermarching of men, to be disregarded. Further, whilst they are in service, the States to which they belong have but little if any chance to engage them for a longer term. When that is out, they will return, though the exigency of affairs should be ever so pressing, and though you should be on the point of action, or perhaps of grasping a victory. Their departure has a most baneful and unhappy influence upon those who remain, who consider themselves, notwithstanding their engagements, as subjected to peculiar hardships, become uneasy and discontented, and many desert. Their return, too, having seen only service sufficient to create disgust, and experienced in the course of it a few difficulties, produces the same disposition through the circle of

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their connexions. In a word, Sir, I cannot advise the volunteer plan, as I conceive the adoption of it would have the most fatal and pernicious tendency; and in my opinion the interest of the States would be more advanced by regular enlistments for the war, though it should take a considerable time to complete them.*

The apologies you offer for your deficiency of troops are not without some weight. I am induced to believe, that the apprehension of the smallpox and its calamitous consequences have greatly retarded the enlistments. But may not those objections be easily done away, by introducing inoculation into the State? Or shall we adhere to a regulation preventing it, reprobated at this time, not only by the consent and usage of the greater part of the civilized world, but by our interest and own experience of its utility? You will pardon my observations on the smallpox, because I know it is more destructive to an army in the natural way, than the enemy's sword, and because I shudder whenever I re-

* At the request of the Virginia Council, Governor Henry had written, lamenting the tardiness with which the Continental enlistments proceeded in that State, and proposing a volunteer corps, which he thought could be raised without much difficulty. He said it would consist of men from the upper country, who would make excellent soldiers, and continue long enough in service to become regularly disciplined. It was a part of the plan, that they should find their own arms, clothes, and blankets, and choose their captains and subalterns, who should in their turn elect the field-officers. They were to be subject to the Continental articles of war.

Governor Henry stated, as an apology for the deficiency in the enlistments of the Virginia regulars, that many obstacles had been thrown in the way. The Georgians and Carolinians had enlisted there two battalions at least; a regiment of artillery was in great forwardness; Colonel Baylor was collecting a regiment of horse, and Colonel Grayson one of the sixteen Additional Regiments. Adding to these the Indian wars and marine service, the want of necessaries, the false reports of deserters, and the terrors of the smallpox, Governor Henry believed it not to be difficult to account for the deficient enlistments in a satisfactory manner.—Governor Henry's *MS. Letter, March 29th.*

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flect upon the difficulties of keeping it out, and that in the vicissitudes of war the scene may be transferred to some southern State. Should it not be the case, their quota of men must come to the field.*

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO LANDON CARTER.

Morristown, 15 April, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I should have been very happy in seeing your grandson enlisted under the banners of his country, and under the care of so good and brave a man as Baylor; but a mother's tenderness and fears too often interpose, and check the ardor of our youth. High as the militia accounts will run, I have had but few men with me all winter. With these, however, we have greatly harassed and distressed the enemy, by continually skirmishing with their foraging parties, and attacking their picket guards; but if I am to judge from the present appearance of things, the campaign will be opened by General Howe before we shall be in any condition to oppose him. No men have yet joined me from the eastward,

* On the 14th of April, General Washington wrote to the Board of War; — "The enemy came out early yesterday morning from Brunswic, with an intent to surprise General Lincoln at Boundbrook, and were near effecting their design by the carelessness of a militia guard, at one of the fords upon the Rariton. But the General got notice of their approach in time to withdraw himself and most of his men to the mountain just in the rear of the town. Our chief and almost only loss was two pieces of artillery, and with them Lieutenants Ferguson and Turnbull, with about twenty men of Colonel Procter's regiment. A party of horse was pushed so suddenly upon them, that they could not possibly get off. The enemy stayed about an hour and a half, and then went back to Brunswic. General Lincoln took his post again with a reinforcement." The assailing party was commanded by Lord Cornwallis, and the British loss was reported by General Howe to be three killed and four wounded.

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and but a small number from the southward, whilst the hard and fatiguing duties of a winter's campaign have reduced the few old regiments, which remained after the dissolution of the army in January, to a mere nothing.

The designs of the enemy are not as yet clearly unfolded, but Philadelphia I conceive is the object in view; however, this may or may not be the case; as the North River must also be an object of very great importance to them, whilst they have an army in Canada and are desirous of a junction with it. Their operations will therefore in a great measure be governed by our preparations for defence. They are very busily employed in building a bridge, to be supported by flat-boats, which boats are to be transported by land on carriages, and are designed, it is imagined, for passing the Delaware. They are also preparing transports for the reception of men, who it is supposed will be sent round by water to Philadelphia to coöperate with those, who may march from Brunswic. But these are mere guesses in the field of conjecture.*

* General Howe, having received information from the minister, that a small number only of the solicited reinforcements would be sent to America, was obliged to change his plan of operations for the campaign, which has been stated above (p. 195, note), and to curtail very considerably his proposed sphere of action. He wrote to Lord George Germain in a secret despatch, on the 2d of April, that the idea of an attempt against New England must be given up, as also that of any important movement up the North River. His main purpose now was to invade Pennsylvania by sea, not deeming a march through the Jerseys expedient, on account of the difficulties and delays that must attend it. Three thousand provincial troops, under Governor Tryon, were to be left at New York, to act on the Hudson, or against Connecticut, as circumstances might point out. At the same time he wrote to Sir Guy Carleton, stating his inability to coöperate with the northern army, particularly in the first part of the campaign. He gave encouragement, however, that a sufficient force might be spared to open the communication for shipping through the Highlands, and that this corps might afterwards act in favor of the northern army. The constructing of the bridge was probably a finesse to conceal his real designs.

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Your friendly and affectionate wishes for my health and success have a claim to my most grateful acknowledgments. That the God of armies may incline the hearts of my American brethren to support the present contest, and bestow sufficient abilities on me to bring it to a speedy and happy conclusion, thereby enabling me to sink into sweet retirement, and the full enjoyment of that peace and happiness, which will accompany a domestic life, is the first wish and most fervent prayer of my soul. My best respects await your good family and neighbours at Mount Airy; as also any other inquiring friends. With every wish for your health and happiness, I remain, dear Sir, your most obedient, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 19 April, 1777.

SIR,

I was honored with your letter of the 17th between twelve and one o'clock yesterday, accompanied by sundry resolutions. I hope the measures Congress have adopted will produce the salutary consequences they had in view; but I fear that the States, unless they are delicate in exercising the powers they are invested with for filling vacancies in instances of removal from office, and pay strict attention to a proper line of succession, where there are no capital objections, will renew much of that confusion and disorder we have been endeavouring to extricate ourselves from. Nor will this be of small difficulty if they displace many officers; for, supposing them to have kept the most accurate lists of their original appointments, changes have taken place

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in several instances from various causes unknown to them, and of which they cannot be apprized.

I can assure Congress the appellation given to the regiments officered by me was without my consent or privity. As soon as I heard it, I wrote to several of the officers in terms of severe reprehension, and expressly charged them to suppress the distinction, adding that all the battalions were on the same footing, and all under the general name of Continental.* An attack upon the King's troops at Rhode Island was certainly a desirable event, could it have been conducted with success, or upon equal terms. It being an object of great moment, and involving in its issue many important consequences, I am led to believe the practicability of it has had much consideration, and the measure was found to be unadvisable under the circumstances of the troops collected for the purpose. If the enemy have not evacuated the Island, I suppose the matter will be further weighed.

Notwithstanding the many circumstances inducing a belief, that Philadelphia will be the first object of the enemy's attention, yet, as the stratagems of war are various, and may be easily changed, especially when they have the entire command of the water, I cannot but consider the detention of the troops at Philadelphia, farther than mentioned in my letter in answer to that from the Board of War, as inexpedient, and subject to great inconvenience and injury. In the present divided, separated state of the army, we are weak at all points, and not able to make the least opposition promising success. Supposing they were collected here, they would be ready to act as necessity and circumstances

* This was in reply to a resolve of Congress, that the appellations "*Congress's Own Regiment*," and "*General Washington's Life Guards*," were improper, and ought not to be kept in use. — *Journals, April 15th.*

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might require. If the enemy pushed for Philadelphia, we should have notice of it, and could hang upon their flank and rear; nor is it likely they would undertake such an expedition, without attempting the destruction or dispersion of the army first. If they embarked and should go by sea, we should have information of it, and could be there in time. On the other hand, should all they have done prove a feint, and they should turn their views to the North River, we should be in a much better situation to counteract their designs, and to check the progress of their arms in that quarter. Added to this, several of the regiments, especially those which came first from Virginia and Pennsylvania, are so broken, that it is impossible to do any thing with the parts that are here; and that spirit, which is always derived from a corps being full, or as much so as circumstances of number will admit, is entirely done away.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Morristown, 24 April, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have been favored with two or three letters from you lately. The last that came to hand was without date, but contained an extract from Doctor Lee's letter to the Secret Committee, and the French general's ideas of the measures necessary for us to pursue in prosecuting the war with Great Britain; for both of which I sincerely thank you, as the communication of such matters cannot fail of having a proper tendency.*

* The following statement will show how much influence a small circumstance will sometimes have in war. Arthur Lee was in Bordeaux on the 20th of February, where he received a letter from a confidential

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The complexion of affairs in Europe seems to indicate an approaching storm; but where, when, or on whom it may break, is not quite so clear, and ought not, in my judgment, to occasion the smallest relaxation in our preparations; for I profess myself to be of that class, who never built sanguinely upon the assistance of France, further than her winking at our supplies from thence for the benefits derived from our trade; and how far the measures and offers of Great Britain may contravene this, time only can discover, and is somewhat to be feared. The plan drawn by the French general is of such a nature, that it is impracticable to carry it into execution this campaign. It may, however, be kept in view, and the whole or such parts of it adopted, as our circumstances, upon a full consideration of the matter, may hereafter admit. The great delay in appointing the general officers, the resignation of some of them, the non-acceptance of others, and I might add the unfitness of a few, joined to the amazing delay in assembling the troops, and the abuses which I am satisfied have been committed by the recruiting officers, (both of which being consequences of the want of officers in that line to superintend those duties in the respective States) have distressed me and the service exceedingly; and they will amply

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correspondent, who assured him, that "Boston was certainly to be attacked in the spring, and that Burgoyne was to command." This intelligence was sent by Arthur Lee to the Secret Committee of Congress, and by them transmitted to General Washington and the Legislature of Massachusetts; thus embarrassing the Commander-in-chief as to the designs of the enemy, and alarming the people of Massachusetts, and turning their thoughts to the raising of forces for their own protection, when the best interests of the cause required them to contribute all the strength in their power to the main army. The intelligence was false, and was probably communicated by a finesse of the British government, with the view of distracting the attention of the Americans, in regard to the real objects of the approaching campaign.

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prove, what I foretold to Congress, that the pay of these officers (for I could account for the delay of appointing them on no other principle) would be an ill-timed saving. Convinced I am, that thousands of pounds would have been saved to the public, if the measure had been adopted upon my first recommendation of it. But the extra expense is the smallest part of the evil. The backwardness in assembling the troops is truly alarming; this, however, is not a singular instance of our suffering by delay in the adoption of measures, which were early recommended.

You are not aware of the evil consequences, that would follow a general exemption of all persons concerned in iron-works from military duty; they are very numerous, and in this part of the country form a great majority of the people. Besides, why should the iron-master carry on his trade without restriction, when the farmer, equally useful for the support of the war, the shoemaker, and other manufacturers, absolutely necessary to the equipment of an army, may have their servants and apprentices taken from them at pleasure? One thing I have ever done, and it has, I believe, answered the end proposed by you; whenever an iron-work has been employed *for the public*, I have desired the owner to give me a return of the number of men, and the names of those necessarily employed therein, and have exempted them from the duties of militia-men in this State. This I have found necessary on two accounts; first, to secure such articles of manufacture as the army wanted; and, next, to prevent numbers under this pretext from withholding their services in the military line, there being, in this county (Morris) alone, between eighty and a hundred iron-works, large and small. Doctor Lee's opinion on the propriety of attacking the enemy upon their first arrival, under a supposition of

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their being raw and undisciplined, is certainly well founded, if our own circumstances will admit of it; but the Doctor little apprehended, I believe, that we ourselves should have an army to raise, at this late hour, of men equally raw, and officers probably much more so. Please to make a tender of my compliments to your brother and other delegates from Virginia.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL GEORGE CLINTON.

Morristown, 26 April, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you on the 23d instant, communicating intelligence lately received respecting the enemy's designs up the North River. A letter from General McDougall, which has this moment come to hand, places their intentions beyond the power of misconception. Several transports have anchored at Dobbs's Ferry, and in my opinion they intend to divert our attention if possible from their movements towards the Delaware. At any rate they may attempt to make some incursions into the country back of this place, and, if they can, seize the passes through the mountains, thereby aiming to cut off the communication between the army here and the North River. To frustrate such a design effectually, I must repeat my desire, that you will post as good a body of troops in the mountains west of the river, as you can collect and spare from the garrison. This will not only serve to retain our possession of the passes, but will awe the disaffected, and protect our friends.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL GLOVER.

Morristown, 26 April, 1777.

SIR,

After the conversations I had with you, before you left the army last winter, I was not a little surprised at the contents of yours of the 1st instant. As I had not the least doubt but you would accept of the commission of brigadier, if conferred upon you by Congress, I put your name down in the list of those, whom I thought proper for the command, and whom I wished to see preferred. Diffidence in an officer is a good mark, because he will always endeavour to bring himself up to what he conceives to be the full line of his duty; but I think I may tell you without flattery, that I know of no man better qualified than yourself to conduct a brigade. You have activity and industry; and as you very well know the duty of a colonel, you know how to exact that duty from others.

I have with great concern observed the almost universal listlessness, that prevails throughout the continent; and I believe that nothing has contributed to it more than the resignation of officers, who stepped early forward and led the people into the great cause, in which we are too deeply embarked to look back, or to hope for any other terms, than those we can gain by the sword. Can any resistance be expected from the people, when deserted by their leaders? Our enemies count upon the resignation of every officer of rank at this time, as a distrust of and desertion from the cause, and rejoice accordingly. When you consider these matters, I hope you will think no more of private inconveniences, but that you will, with all expedition, come forward and take that command, which has been assigned to you. As I fully depend upon seeing you,

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I shall not mention any thing that has passed between us upon this subject to the Congress. I am, Sir, &c.*

TO DOCTOR JAMES CRAIK.†

Morristown, 26 April, 1777.

DEAR DOCTOR,

I am going to address you on a subject, which may lay some claim to your attention, as I do to your candor in deciding on the proposition. In the hospital department for the middle district, which district includes the States between the North or Hudson's River and the Potomac, there are at present two places vacant, either of which I can obtain for you. The one is Senior Physician and Surgeon of the Hospital, with the pay of four dollars and six rations per day, and forage for one

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* General Glover changed his mind after receiving this letter. He accepted the appointment, and in a few days joined the army. In the letter, to which the above was an answer, he gave as a reason for declining the commission, that he did not think himself qualified to fill an office of that rank. This objection was so novel, that it is fair to presume there were other motives acting on the mind of General Glover, though not explained in his letter.

† Dr. Craik was a most intimate personal friend of Washington, from the very beginning of his public career till the end of his life. On the 7th of March, 1754, Dr. Craik was commissioned a surgeon in the regiment commanded by Colonel Fry, and shortly afterwards by Colonel Washington. He was in the army during that campaign, and present at the battle of the Great Meadows. The year following he was a surgeon in Braddock's army, and took part in the memorable action of the Monongahela. He was often heard to say, in relating the particulars of that eventful conflict, that he expected every moment to see Colonel Washington fall, while riding in the most exposed manner, after nearly all the officers had been either killed or disabled by wounds. Dr. Craik served almost the whole of the French war in the Virginia regiment, and then settled as a physician in the neighbourhood of Mount Vernon, and finally at Alexandria. From that time he was the physician to Washington's family, and ever associated with him on terms of the closest friendship.

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horse; the other is Assistant Director-General, with the pay of three dollars and six rations per day, and two horses and travelling expenses found, according to Doctor Shippen, the director-general's account, who also adds, that he thinks this latter the more honorable and desirable of the two. Had I expected that Congress would proceed to the appointments in this department, at the time they did, I have no doubt but that it might have been in my power to get you any other place, except that of director-general; but that is now over; and the matter in which I claim your candor is, that you will not let my introducing the present proposition to you have any undue influence.

You know the extent and profit of your present practice; you know what prospects are before you; you know how far you may be benefited or injured by such an appointment; and you must know whether it is advisable or practicable for you to quit your family and practice at this time. All these matters I am ignorant of; and request, as a friend, that my proposing this matter to you may have no influence upon your acceptance of it. I have no other end in view, than to serve you; consequently, if you are not benefited by the appointment, my end is not answered. I have only to add, therefore, a request, that you will let me know the result of your determination by the return of the post, or as soon as possible, as the places will be kept vacant till I hear from you. My best respects to Mrs. Craik and your family, and believe me to be, with the sincerest regard and esteem, dear Doctor, your affectionate and obedient servant.*

* Dr. Craik accepted the appointment of Assistant Director-General of the Middle Department.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

Morristown, 27 April, 1777.

Sir,

I am well convinced, that the amazing desertions, which have of late prevailed among our troops, proceed entirely from their not being regularly paid. For it is not to be supposed, that the bare encouragement of receiving a few dollars from the enemy for their arms could operate so forcibly upon them. I have in vain endeavoured to make the officers bring in their pay-roll and draw their money; they plead in excuse, that, as they are so detached, they cannot possibly make up regular rolls, and there may be something in this. But there is a cause, which, I fear, will be found upon examination too true, and that is, that the officers have drawn large sums, under pretence of paying their men; but have been obliged, from extravagance and for other purposes, to appropriate this money to their own use. There is a necessity, at this time, for the men's being paid up as nearly as possible. I therefore desire, that you will have the different corps under your command paraded, inquire of them what pay is due to them, order the pay-master or commanding officer to draw as much as will be necessary, and when it is drawn, see that the soldiers have their proportion.

It would be well to let the soldiers know, that this irregularity of pay has been owing to the hurry in which they have been detached into the field, but that their wants shall be fully supplied. I also desire, that you will inform the officers, that, as soon as the regiments are drawn together, I shall cause an exact scrutiny to be made into their accounts, and inquire how these complaints of the soldiers arise for want of pay, when large sums have been advanced for that purpose. I am, &c.

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TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL McDOUGALL.

Morristown, 28 April, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

At three o'clock this morning I received your favor of the 27th. The intelligence it contains is interesting and truly distressing. By this time I fear the enemy have effected their purpose, and destroyed all the stores at Danbury. I wish those at Fredericksburg may not have shared the same fate. After accomplishing this enterprise, it is probable they will return to their ships with expedition. If they have not done it, it is most devoutly to be wished, that their retreat could be cut off. You I am certain will act for the best, and as circumstances shall point out. However, I am induced to believe, that the ships sent up the North River have but few troops on board, and the design of their being there was to amuse and call your attention with the troops to Peekskill and the other posts, till the detachment from the Sound executed their plans, or they would have disembarked at the same time, and made some other different attempt. Under this persuasion, I could wish you, unless some facts within your own knowledge, or which appear to be tolerably well founded, from the information you have received, contradict the measure, to try to cut off their retreat, by detaching all the force you can spare, and which shall not be absolutely necessary to guard the passes in the mountains, and to maintain the forts. I cannot, nor do I mean, to prescribe any line of duty. I have only mentioned my ideas of the North River shipping, and the views with which they were sent, and my wishes to make the detachments from the Sound pay for the enterprise, if circumstances will allow it. I am, &c.*

* The British shipping was probably sent up the North River for

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 28 April, 1777.

Sir,

At three o'clock this morning I received a letter from General McDougall, enclosing three from Colonel Huntington, copies of the whole of which I have transmitted. By these you will perceive the impression, which a part of General Howe's army has made into Connecticut, and the prospect they had of destroying such of our stores as were deposited in Danbury, which unfortunately were but too large and considerable, if the event has taken place. A circumstance, perhaps more to be regretted, is, that the enemy marched through a strong and rough country, and were near that place, without the smallest opposition. I have no other information upon the subject, than what these papers contain; but we have little ground to expect, that they have not accomplished their purpose. Further intelligence will be probably received to-day or to-morrow, when I shall be happy to hear that they have paid for their enterprise. Of this, I confess, however, I am not very sanguine in my expectations.*

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two objects; the first to menace Peekskill, and thus prevent General McDougall from despatching any forces towards Danbury; and the second to receive the troops, who were sent against that place, should circumstances render the route to the North River more expedient, than a return to their landing-place on the Sound. General McDougall, however, had anticipated General Washington's advice, and marched with twelve hundred men and one field-piece as far as Bedford, where he heard that the enemy had retreated towards Norwalk, and were beyond his reach.

* On the 25th of April, about five o'clock in the afternoon, two thousand British troops landed at Compo, near Fairfield, under the command of Governor Tryon, with the design of proceeding into the country to Danbury, twenty-three miles from the place of landing, and of destroying the public stores collected in that town. They reached Danbury the next day at four o'clock in the afternoon, having met with no opposition in

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This post had been considered as a proper depository for stores, by gentlemen acquainted with it; and its security not thought questionable whilst troops were passing through it. I had also directed that as many of the drafts in Connecticut, as the place was capable of accommodating, should be collected there and inoculated, to answer the purpose of a guard, hoping, by the time of their recovery, that the situation of the army would be such as to admit a strong one to be stationed there and continued; but, unhappily for us, such languor and supineness prevail everywhere, that we seem unable to effect any point we wish, though never so important and interesting. So early as the 6th of March, I wrote to Governor Trumbull, earnestly requesting two thousand militia to be sent to General McDougall, to be employed at Peekskill and on the communication in Westchester county for six weeks. With this requisi-

their march. They immediately set fire to the public stores, and several private dwelling-houses. Colonel Huntington was at Danbury with fifty Continental soldiers and one hundred militia, a force too feeble to attempt any resistance, and he retreated to the heights near the town.

Meantime General Silliman, an officer of the Connecticut militia, who was at Fairfield and saw the landing of the enemy, called together as many militia as possible, and sent off a small party that evening, who came upon the enemy and had a skirmish with their advanced guard. The next morning General Silliman marched in pursuit, with all the men he could muster. About four miles from Reading he was joined by General Arnold, and at Reading they met General Wooster. Their whole force was now six hundred men, of whom one hundred were Continental. Here they stopped to refresh their troops, and they reached Bethel, on the road to Danbury, about twelve o'clock at night, where they heard that the town was destroyed. At daylight the next morning Arnold and Silliman proceeded with four hundred men to Ridgefield, with the design of intercepting the enemy on their return; and Wooster with two hundred men took another route to harass their rear. He soon fell in with the enemy's retreating column, and in a skirmish received a mortal wound. When Arnold arrived at Ridgefield his numbers had increased to five hundred. He took a position across the road, threw up a breastwork, and waited the approach of the enemy, which happened at three o'clock in the afternoon, when a sharp conflict ensued and continued

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tion he most readily complied, so far as his orders were necessary, and, I am certain, as his influence would extend. This I have repeated, and this supply he has exerted himself to furnish; yet so ineffectual have his endeavours been, that not more than eight hundred had come out, by General McDougall's return on the 17th instant; nor did he expect more, from the accounts he had. In a word, Sir, no expedient or pains have been unattempted by me to bring on troops, and to keep our affairs on a favorable footing. I would again mention the case of our prisoners with the enemy, and pray that the Secret Committee would send to Mr. Boudinot supplies of money for them as early as possible. They are in great distress, and many officers have lately escaped, contrary to the tenor of their parole; some of whom are now here, urging that necessity compelled them to the measure. I have the honor to be, &c.

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for nearly an hour. The Americans gave way, but rallied and pursued the enemy to their ships, having several sharp skirmishes with them that evening and the next day, till they all left the beach in their boats. Colonel Huntington had also assailed the enemy's rear, and joined the main body under Arnold.

The conduct of General Wooster was commended in the highest terms. Colonel Huntington wrote, the day after the action, that "till he received his wound he commanded the unconnected and undisciplined troops with great spirit, zeal, and bravery." He died on the 2d of May. Arnold behaved with his usual coolness and intrepidity. At Ridgefield his horse was killed under him, and he saved himself by drawing his pistol and shooting a soldier, who, after having discharged his musket, was rushing upon Arnold with his bayonet. The next day another horse, on which he rode, was shot through the neck. The enemy embarked on the 28th at night, having been engaged in the expedition three days. Of the Americans twenty were killed, and between seventy and eighty wounded. Forty of the enemy were known to have been killed, and it was presumed the number was considerably larger. Several prisoners were taken. The loss in public stores was severely felt, particularly that of sixteen hundred and ninety tents, which had been removed from Peekskill to Danbury for safe keeping, and were very much wanted in the army. — *MS. Letters of Generals Arnold and Silliman, and Colonel Huntington, dated April 27th and 28th.*

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TO COLONEL ALEXANDER SPOTSWOOD.

Morristown, 30 April, 1777.

SIR,

I want to form a company for my guard. In doing this I wish to be extremely cautious, because it is more than probable, that, in the course of the campaign, my baggage, papers, and other matters of great public import, may be committed to the sole care of these men. This being premised, in order to impress you with proper attention in the choice, I have to request, that you will immediately furnish me with four men of your regiment; and, as it is my farther wish, that this company should look well and be nearly of a size, I desire that none of the men may exceed in stature five feet ten inches, nor fall short of five feet nine inches, sober, young, active, and well made. When I recommend care in your choice, I would be understood to mean men of good character in the regiment, that possess the pride of appearing clean and soldierlike. I am satisfied there can be no absolute security for the fidelity of this class of people, but yet I think it most likely to be found in those, who have family connexions in the country. You will therefore send me none but natives, and men of some property, if you have them. I must insist, that, in making this choice, you give no intimation of my preference of natives, as I do not want to create any invidious distinction between them and the foreigners. I am, yours, &c.*

* The same letter was sent as a circular to the colonels of three other regiments.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 5 May, 1777.

SIR,

I was this morning honored with your letter of the 3d instant, with its enclosures. General Arnold's promotion gives me much pleasure. He has certainly discovered, in every instance where he has had an opportunity, much bravery, activity, and enterprise. But what will be done about his rank? He will not act most probably under those he commanded but a few weeks ago.* By Major Troup, one of General Gates's aids, and who left Albany on Tuesday last, I am informed the accounts of General Carleton's approach towards Ticonderoga were premature. He says General Gates received a letter before he came away, from Brigadier-General Wayne, of the 24th ultimo, in which he mentioned nothing of it; that three thousand troops had arrived there, all in high spirits and health, except nine; and that that post could never be carried without the loss of much blood. The proceedings of Congress and your letter of the 29th ultimo were the first and only information I had of Mr. Carleton's being on the Lake, having heard nothing upon the subject from General Gates or any other person.

In my last I mentioned that sixteen dollars' bounty

* Immediately after receiving the intelligence of Arnold's brave conduct at Danbury, Congress promoted him to the appointment of major-general, although, owing to his having been superseded on the 19th of February, he now ranked below several officers, whom he had commanded. A few days afterwards, Congress likewise resolved, "That the quarter-master-general be directed to procure a horse, and present the same properly caparisoned to Major-General Arnold, in the name of this Congress, as a token of their approbation of his gallant conduct in the action against the enemy in their late enterprise to Danbury, in which General Arnold had one horse shot under him, and another wounded."—*Journals, May 20th.*

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was given by General Howe to deserters with arms. I have reason to believe from information received since, and which seems to be generally credited, that he has advanced the bounty to twenty-four dollars. It is much to be wished, that our printers were more discreet in many of their publications. We see, almost in every paper, proclamations or accounts transmitted by the enemy, of an injurious nature. If some hint or caution could be given to them on the subject, it might be of material service. By a person, who has just arrived here, it is reported that General Wooster is dead of his wounds. I would mention to Congress, that in a day or two our military chest will be exhausted. I beg that a supply may be forwarded as soon as possible; if there should be a failure, we shall have many things to apprehend. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL McDOUGALL.

Morristown, 7 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The imperfect state of the fortifications of Fort Montgomery gives me great uneasiness, because I think from a concurrence of circumstances, that it begins to look as if the enemy intended to turn their view towards the North River, instead of the Delaware. I therefore desire, that General George Clinton and yourself will fall upon every measure to put the fortifications in such a state, that they may at least resist a sudden attack, and keep the enemy employed, till reinforcements may arrive. If the North River is their object, they cannot accomplish it unless they withdraw their forces from Jersey, and that they cannot do unknown to us. Your present force is fully sufficient to oppose any body of

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men, that can be sent against you, previous to the calling the detachments from Jersey and Rhode Island.

As Congress have lately appointed General Arnold to the rank of major-general, I have written to him, and desired him to come immediately forward to Peekskill. Not but that I place entire confidence in you, and should not have thought of superseding you, but upon your own request. I think you will find him a man of judgment, and particularly serviceable in giving directions for the armament of the galleys or making any kind of water opposition. By what rule, or by what right, the State of Massachusetts undertook to make their soldiers pay for the public arms I cannot conceive. To give the soldier the least pretence to a property in his arms, except so far as to pay for them if he lost or destroyed them, was what I had been laboring to put a stop to; and to admit this, would be to put things upon the same bad footing, on which they had been. I therefore desire, that all the arms and accoutrements without exception may be branded; and if any thing has been stopped from the soldiers for their arms, I will order it to be returned. I look upon the several pieces of intelligence communicated by General Arnold, of the intentions of the enemy, as mere report, or only thrown out to amuse; for you may be assured, that when they mean to move in earnest, it will not be in detachments. As Generals Arnold and Parsons may not be at New Haven, for which place their letters are directed, I beg you will send them on by a person, who will see to the delivery of them, as they are of consequence. I am, &c.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 9 May, 1777.

SIR,

This will be delivered to you by Colonel Conway, an Irish gentleman in the service of France, who came passenger in the Amphitrite, and was introduced to me yesterday by a letter from Mr. Deane, and one from General Heath, copies of which are transmitted. This gentleman waits on Congress to obtain an appointment in the army of the States, and, from Mr. Deane's recommendation, is an officer of merit. He says no particular command was agreed on between him and Mr. Deane; nor does he wish otherwise than that Congress should exercise their own discretion; at the same time he observes, that it will be mortifying to him to hold a rank under that of Messieurs de Fermoy and Deborre, who were inferior officers in their own service, and subject to his command. He can give the character of several of the officers, who were passengers with him.

I cannot pretend to speak of Colonel Conway's merits or abilities, of my own knowledge, having had but little opportunity to be acquainted with him. From what I can discover, he appears to be a man of candor; and, if he has been in service as long as he says, I should suppose him infinitely better qualified to serve us, than many who have been promoted, as he speaks our language. He seems extremely anxious to return to camp, as the campaign may be expected to become active every day; and wishes Congress to determine whatever command they may think proper to honor him with, as soon as they shall think it expedient.*

I have the honor to be, &c.

* In Mr. Deane's letter to Congress respecting Colonel Conway, he stated it to be the design of that officer to establish himself in America,

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TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Morristown, 11 May, 1777.

SIR,

I regret our loss of stores at Danbury, and the misfortunes of our brave men who fell, and of those who were wounded. However, from these latter events we derive this consolation, that the sentiments of the people are still powerfully directed to liberty, and that no impression of the enemy, be it ever so sudden and unexpected, will pass with impunity. We cannot ascertain what the enemy's loss was; but, from our own, when our men fought in parties, and theirs in a compact body, and other circumstances of information from New York, I think it must have been considerable. Another happy consequence, which must necessarily result from this affair, is, that the enemy will engage in such enterprises in future with much caution and circumspection; for, though they should be able to accomplish their end in destroying stores, yet the means attending it will be disagreeable.

That the enemy will harass our coasts and injure the

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and become a citizen. Deane moreover added, that Colonel Conway was well qualified to fill the office of adjutant or brigadier general, and that he had promised that Congress should grant him one of these ranks. He likewise advanced a part of his pay. — *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 76. It would seem, that Conway arrived with small means at his command, as General Heath furnished him with one hundred and fifty dollars to bear his expenses from Boston to Philadelphia. Conway was appointed a brigadier-general by Congress on the 13th of May. In the record of his appointment he is styled a knight of the order of St. Louis. The Chevalier Deborre had already been appointed a brigadier-general (April 11th), with a commission dated the 1st of December past, according to the compact made in France between him and Mr. Deane. Four Pennsylvania regiments in Lord Stirling's division constituted Conway's brigade; and the German Battalion and three Maryland regiments, in the division of Major-General Sullivan, were assigned to Deborre.

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maritime towns, with their shipping and by sudden debarkations of small parties of men, is not improbable, and is what we cannot prevent, whilst they have the entire command of the water. This we laid our account in, when we first engaged in the contest; but I have no idea that they will penetrate into your State to form the junction you mention; nor is it likely that those, who have escaped from them, know the General's design. It is much to be wished, that they would make that their plan of war. I should then expect most sanguinely, that we should bring the matter to a speedy and glorious conclusion.

I should be happy, were it in my power, to station guards of Continental troops at every place subject to the depredations of the enemy; but this cannot be done. If we divide and detach our forces to every part, where the enemy may possibly attempt an impression, we shall effect no one good purpose, but, in the end, destroy ourselves and subjugate our country. The enemy have certainly some capital object in view; either Philadelphia or Hudson's River. Till their designs are unfolded, all the troops from this and the more southern States must assemble in this quarter, to prevent their possessing the former. Those raised in the eastern States, except such as were ordered immediately to Ticonderoga, must march to Peekskill, to prevent them from possessing the latter and the important passes through the Highlands. Should they be able to carry those and the fortifications for the defence of the river, we all know the important and fatal consequences that would follow. I confess myself, and so do all who have reasoned about their operations, that the latter, from its importance and a variety of circumstances, which have occurred of late, seems to be the object of their attention. For these reasons and because

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the battalions, which are in service, from inoculation, the languor which has but too generally prevailed in enlisting, and from other causes, are extremely weak and deficient, and totally inadequate to check the progress of the enemy, I cannot comply with your request for two regiments to remain in the State at this time. I heartily wish, that Congress would inform me of the dispositions they make of the troops. Their not doing it disconcerts my arrangements and involves me in difficulties. Till the favor of your letter, I never had the least intimation, that I recollect, that any of the regiments, exacted from the States, were to remain in them. Nor do I know an instance, in which Continental troops are stationed in any State where the enemy have not a post. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Morristown, 12 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

In your ride to and from Peekskill, I would have you make the best observations, that time and circumstances will admit, upon the country, and point out at your return such places for posts of communication, as you shall conceive necessary. Determine upon the propriety of having a post at Pompton, examine the works throwing up at that place, and give such directions to General Heard, or the officer commanding the militia there, respecting them, as shall appear to you proper.

After examining the state and condition of the forts in the Highlands, especially Fort Montgomery, the probability of an attack by water, and the practicability

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of approaching them by land, after seeing where, and how this is to be effected, viewing the eminences from whence these forts can be annoyed, and hearing the sentiments of the general officers present, you will give such orders for further defence, as shall appear to you necessary for the greater security of the passes, by land and water, through the Highlands; and, moreover, dispose of the troops in such a manner, as you shall judge most likely to answer the end in view. The pass through the Highlands on the west side of the North River should also be attended to, lest the enemy by a *coup de main* should possess themselves of it, before a sufficient force can be assembled to oppose them. This, however, may be the work of militia, if to be had; if not, the detachments of eastern troops, under Colonels Butler and Olney, upon giving me notice, shall be sent thither.

Turn your attention also to the boats, and direct them to be removed to the place or places of greatest safety, and where they can be had for the transportation of our troops over the North River, if occasion should require it. Examine into the state of the military stores and stock of provisions at the forts, and direct a sufficiency, having an eye to circumstances; for if the works are not tenable, or the passage of the river defensible, a large stock of either would only add to our losses; if they are, supplies can easily be brought to them, if the enemy can be kept below the Highlands, and Carleton from our backs. Inquire what has been or can be done towards removing the stores from Derby and other places to the west side of the North River, and learn if possible how the country on this side is stored with provisions and forage for the support of troops, if any should be marched thither. Keep the precise time of your return secret, lest the dis-

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affected should avail themselves of the knowledge to offer you an insult. I am, dear Sir, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 12 May, 1777.

SIR,

This will be delivered you by General Arnold, who arrived here to-day on his way to Philadelphia. He seems to be anxious to settle his public accounts, which are of considerable amount, and waits on Congress, hoping they will appoint a committee of their body, or of such gentlemen as they shall judge proper, to take the

* General Knox was associated with General Greene in carrying these instructions into effect. They proceeded to the Highlands, and examined the river and the passes in company with Generals McDougall, George Clinton, and Wayne, the last of whom had just returned from Ticonderoga. These five officers wrote a joint report to General Washington, on the 17th of May, in which they recommended, that the obstruction across the river at Fort Montgomery should be completed in the following manner; namely, that a boom or chain should be stretched across, in front of which should be one or two cables to break the force of a vessel before it should strike the chain; that two Continental ships then on the spot, and two row-galleys, should be manned and stationed just above the obstruction, in such a position as to fire upon the enemy's ships in front when they approached. This force, with the land batteries on the margins of the river, the Generals believed would be sufficient to defeat any efforts of the enemy to ascend by water. They also added; "We are very confident, if the obstructions of the river can be rendered effectual, the enemy will not attempt to operate by land, the passes through the Highlands are so exceedingly difficult." This opinion proved, nevertheless, not to be well founded, as Fort Montgomery was afterwards assaulted and taken by a party, which penetrated the defiles of the Highlands on the west side of the river.

The boom was constructed with difficulty. To support the weight of the chain, it was necessary to place under it large rafts of timber at small distances from each other, which, together with the chain itself, presented such obstructions to the descending current, as to raise the water several feet, by which its force was increased, and the chain broken. This was in part remedied by the cables passing on the lower side of the chain.

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matter into consideration. This he considers the more necessary, as he has heard some reports have been propagated, injurious to his character as a man of integrity. If any such aspersions lie against him, it is but reasonable that he should have an opportunity of vindicating himself and evincing his innocence.

I find he does not consider the promotion Congress have been pleased to confer upon him sufficient to obviate the neglect, arising from their having omitted him in their late appointments of major-generals. He observes it does not give him the rank he had a claim to from seniority in the line of brigadiers, and that he is subject to be commanded by those, who had been inferior to him. He further adds, that Congress, in their last resolve respecting him, have acknowledged him competent to the station of major-general, and therefore have done away every objection implied by their former omission. These considerations are not without their weight, though I pretend not to judge what motives may have influenced the conduct of Congress upon this occasion. It is needless to say any thing of this gentleman's military character; it is universally known, that he has always distinguished himself as a judicious, brave officer, of great activity, enterprise, and perseverance. I have the honor to be, &c.*

* As soon as General Washington heard of Arnold's promotion to the rank of major-general, he appointed him to the command at Peekskill, with orders, on the 8th of May, to repair to that post. When Arnold came to head-quarters, however, General Washington granted him permission to proceed to Philadelphia, according to his request, and ordered General Putnam to Peekskill, the present arrangement of the army requiring a major-general in that station. The Commander-in-chief wrote to General McDougall; "As some matters are to be settled to the satisfaction of General Arnold, previous to his accepting the rank lately conferred upon him, he is gone to Philadelphia. I have therefore ordered General Putnam to Peekskill. You are well acquainted with the old gentleman's temper; he is active, disinterested, and open to conviction,

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL DE HEISTER.*

Morristown, 13 May, 1777.

SIR,

I was honored with your favor of the 8th instant by Captain O'Riley of the Hessian corps. Although the receipt and distribution of money and other necessaries, intended for prisoners, properly fall within the commissary's department (who shall strictly attend to all directions that come with them), and must in future pass through his hands; yet I will not, in this instance, refuse permission to Lieutenant Miller to go with the desired transport, accompanied by one of my officers; for which purpose a passport is enclosed. Lieutenant Miller will call upon General Lincoln at Boundbrook, who has my orders to furnish the escort. I would extend this indulgence to some of your non-commissioned officers, did circumstances justify it.

Count Donop's verbal message by Captain O'Riley gave me much uneasiness, as it must be founded on the supposition, that an application of a similar nature had already met a refusal. I enjoy too much pleasure in softening the hardships of captivity, to withhold any

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and I therefore hope, that, by affording him the advice and assistance, which your knowledge of the post enables you to do, you will be very happy in your command under him." — *Letter, May 16th.*

Arnold was unsuccessful in applying to Congress for the restoration of his rank. His enemies in that assembly seem to have been more numerous than his friends, though they were compelled by the public voice to render at least a show of justice to his acts of extraordinary bravery and military conduct. Richard Henry Lee wrote in Congress to Mr. Jefferson, May 20th, as follows. "One plan, now in frequent use, is to assassinate the characters of the friends of America, in every place, and by every means. At this moment they are now reading in Congress an audacious attempt of this kind against the brave General Arnold." — *Life of R. H. Lee*, Vol. II. p. 38.

* Commander-in-chief of the Hessian troops serving with the British in America.

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comfort from prisoners; and I beg you to do me the justice to conclude, that no requisition of this nature, that should be made, will ever be denied. I am highly honored by your good opinion of me, and hope that no part of my future conduct will give you cause to change it. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MONSIEUR MALMEDY.*

Head-Quarters, 16 May, 1777.

SIR,

In answer to your letter of the 14th I must freely confess, that I do not fully comprehend your meaning; nor can I forbear expressing my surprise, that you still hold out the idea of difficulties in your situation, notwithstanding the mark of attention you mention, which has been lately conferred upon you by Congress. It astonishes me, that a gentleman of your discernment should find it impossible to make a right distinction between Continental and State appointments, after all the pains that have been taken to explain it. Certainly there is nothing easier to conceive, than that an appointment made by the legislature of a particular State, unauthorized by Congress, can have no effect out of that State. The reason is plain. Such legislature has only a local jurisdiction, and can do no act binding on any other State, much less on the whole continent. Your rank of brigadier in Rhode Island, on a Conti-

* Monsieur Malmedy was a French officer, who had served in Rhode Island, and received from that State the commission of brigadier-general. On the 10th of May, Congress appointed him a colonel in the Continental service, which he thought was below his merit, and not consistent with his previous rank. He made known his disappointment and dissatisfaction in a letter to General Washington. He had been advanced in Rhode Island in consequence of the recommendation of General Lee.

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nental scale, is, and always has been, entirely nugatory. You might request a ratification of it from Congress, as a matter of favor, but you could not demand it as a matter of right; and you must be sensible, that many substantial reasons, independent of any personal objections to you, oppose your wish. A perseverance in your mistaken pretensions, after you had seen they could not be complied with, is what I did not expect. To request to be employed in a manner not derogatory to the rank you held in Rhode Island, according to your ideas of that rank, is to request not to be employed at all. I must repeat what I have before told you, that I cannot consider you in any other light, than that in which Congress has placed you; and whatever employment I may at any time have it in my power to give you, must be in conformity to that precise rank you actually possess in the Continental army. If you expect any other, you deceive yourself. Such an employment, though it may appear to you a degradation, would not in fact be so; because your appointment of brigadier is a perfect nonentity in a Continental view.

If you formed erroneous notions of your State appointment, and in consequence of them made representations to your friends in Europe, which now involve you in perplexities, you ought to consider it as your misfortune, and should not build any claims upon it that cannot be admitted. But though the distinctions existing among us may not be well understood in France, as you have hinted in a former letter, is it impossible to give a satisfactory explanation of them to your friends? Or will it be any indelible disgrace to you, to confess to them that you have been in an error in your first conceptions, arising from your being a stranger, and unacquainted with the nature of our dif-

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ferent military establishments? We ought not to convert trifling difficulties into insuperable obstacles.

Let me propose a few more questions. Appeal to your own understanding and conscience, and then answer. Is not the Continental rank, which you now hold, fully adequate to any expectations you can reasonably deduce from the rank you held in the French army, and for the short term of seven months' service in ours? Would not the American officers, who have been in the service from the beginning of the war, have a just cause to complain of your too rapid promotion, were your wishes indulged? And would it not justify those, who have been your superior officers in your own country, in raising their hopes to a height, which it would be impossible to gratify? In short, Sir, I cannot bring myself to think, that the extraordinary mark of distinction, bestowed upon you by the State of Rhode Island, is any sufficient foundation for expecting the continent to wave every consideration of policy or propriety in your behalf. Though I wish not to offend or wound, yet justice both to you and myself requires, that I should plainly inform you, that your scruples and difficulties so often reiterated, and under a variety of shapes, are exceedingly perplexing to me, and that I wish them to cease. I am, Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 16 May, 1777.

SIR,

Your letter of the 15th I had the honor to receive last night at eleven o'clock. The commission enclosed for Monsieur Armand I shall deliver to him as soon as I

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see him.* Agreeably to your request, I will give commissions to the brigadiers, and will ascertain their rank by their original commissions when I obtain them. The inquiry directed, respecting Major Campbell, shall be made, and that be done which shall appear right.

I fear it will be hardly possible to satisfy the views and claims of some of the French gentlemen. The late promotion of Monsieur Malmedy, though highly honorable, and such as should be considered fully if not more than adequate to his pretensions, taken upon any principle, does not come up to his demands. He arrived here yesterday morning, and has been writing to me upon the subject. From the high marks of distinction but too readily conferred upon these men in many instances, they seem to have lost sight of what is just and reasonable. It would have been happy for us, particularly for me and for the gentlemen themselves, if a too easy grant of favors had not induced them to contemn all rank in our army under that of field-officers; nor is it in my power to give commands to every appointment. I shall inform Monsieur Armand, and reconcile him to it in the best manner I can, that there is no vacancy for him at present; and I would beg leave to suggest, that, where promotions are made in future from political and honorary motives, it would be well for Congress to explain to the gentlemen, that it may be some time before they can be put in actual command. This might prevent

* Monsieur Armand, Marquis de la Rouerie, was a French officer, who had been ten yèars in service, and received the rank of colonel from Congress on the 10th of May. At his own request he was commissioned to raise a partisan corps of Frenchmen, not exceeding two hundred men. It was thought, that some advantage would result from such a corps, by bringing together into a body such soldiers, as did not understand the English language. Colonel Armand was a zealous and spirited officer during the whole revolution, and continued on terms of friendly correspondence with Washington for several years after the war ended.

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their entertaining suspicions of neglect on my part, which the situation of the army will not allow me to obviate. There is no vacancy for Monsieur Malmedy, of the rank he now holds, unless the merits of many other officers, who have served with reputation and much longer here, are to be overlooked to make way for him. Such a measure will neither be practicable, nor prudent to attempt.

By a letter from General Heard, who is at Pompton, I am informed that Colonels Barton and Bushkirk, with three hundred Tory levies from Bergen, on the morning of the 13th, attempted to surprise and cut off about seventy of his militia stationed at Paramus. The officer happily had notice of their design, and eluded it by moving his post. It happened that the morning was foggy; and, the enemy entering at different places, their parties engaged. General Heard says their loss could not be ascertained; but, from the reports of the inhabitants, ten of their men were killed and carried away at one time, and several wounded. I have the honor, &c.

TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Morristown, 17 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Under the privilege of friendship, I take the liberty to ask you, what Congress expect I am to do with the many foreigners they have at different times promoted to the rank of field-officers, and, by the last resolve, two to that of colonels? In making these appointments, it is much to be feared, that all the attending circumstances are not taken into consideration. To oblige the adventurers of a nation, which we want to interest in our cause, may be one inducement; and to get rid of

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their importunity, another; but this is viewing the matter by halves, or on one side only. These men have no attachment nor ties to the country, further than interest binds them; they have no influence, and are ignorant of the language they are to receive and give orders in; consequently great trouble or much confusion must follow. But this is not the worst; they have not the smallest chance to recruit others; and our officers think it exceedingly hard, after they have toiled in this service, and probably have sustained many losses, to have strangers put over them, whose merit perhaps is not equal to their own, but whose effrontery will take no denial.

The management of this matter, give me leave to add, Sir, is a delicate point; for although no one will dispute the right of Congress to make appointments, every person will assume the privilege of judging of the propriety of them; and good policy, in my opinion, forbids the disgusting of a whole corps to gratify the pride of an individual; for it is by the zeal and activity of our own people, that the cause must be supported, and not by a few hungry adventurers. Besides, the error of these appointments is now clear and manifest, and the views of Congress evidently defeated; for by giving high rank to people of no reputation or service, you have disgusted their own countrymen; or, in other words, raised their expectations to an insatiable pitch. For the man, who was a captain in France, finding another who was only a subaltern there, or perhaps nothing, appointed to a majority with us, extends his views instantly to a regiment; in like manner, the field-officer can accept of nothing less than a brigade, and so on, by which means the man of real rank and merit must be excluded, or perhaps your whole military system disordered. In the mean while I am haunted and

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teased to death by the importunity of some, and dissatisfaction of others.

My ideas, in this representation, do not extend to artillery officers and engineers. The first of these will be useful, if they do not break in upon the arrangement of that corps already established by order of Congress; the second are absolutely necessary and not to be had here. But proper precaution should be observed in the choice of them; for we have at present in pay and high rank two Frenchmen, who, in my judgment, know nothing of the duty of engineers. Gentlemen of this profession ought to produce sufficient and authentic testimonials of their skill and knowledge, and not expect that a pompous narrative of services, and loss of papers, the usual excuse, can be a proper introduction into our army. The freedom, with which I have delivered my sentiments on this subject, will, I am persuaded, meet your excuse, when I assure you, that I have nothing else in view, than the good of the service.

I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL PARSONS.

Morristown, 17 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I was favored yesterday with your letter of the 11th instant. I wrote to Governor Trumbull fully, and informed him, that no part of the troops exacted from the State could remain there. This letter I presume has reached the Governor, and I trust the observations contained in it would satisfy him of the necessity of drawing the whole troops together. I think with you, that the enemy will make no impressions into Connecticut. If they attempt any thing of the sort, it will be to

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call our attention from more important objects. It is much to be wished, that they would prosecute the war on a partisan or detached plan. Nothing could more certainly ensure their destruction. The troops, as fast as they are raised, and their recovery from the small-pox will admit, must come on to Peekskill.

I am sorry the expedient, adopted by the Governor and Council for filling their quota of men, has not been attended with all the advantages expected from it.* I wish their next attempt may have more happy consequences. I am persuaded your remaining in the State some time longer would be of service; yet, as I consider the defence of the fortifications and passes through the Highlands an object of the last importance, and possessing them most probably to form the chief end of the enemy's counsels and immediate operations, I wish you to come to Peekskill, and there continue with the troops, till some further disposition shall become necessary or may be ordered. At the same time, I would wish you to fix upon and leave behind a sufficient number of proper officers, to collect and hasten on the recruits as fast as they are raised and gone through inoculation. Perhaps more than one may be necessary; and I have no doubt you will choose for this purpose such as will be of great activity and industry, and in whose conduct the most implicit confidence may be reposed.

How far the expedition to Long Island would be practicable, supposing our army was full, I cannot de-

* This expedient was by drafting a certain proportion of the militia, for the purpose of filling up the Continental battalions. The same plan was adopted by Massachusetts and New Hampshire. The drafts were to be considered in all respects as Continental soldiers, but were to serve only till the first of January; and in the mean time enlistments for completing the several battalions according to the plan of Congress were to be prosecuted.

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termine. In our present situation, we have no men to spare for the purpose. Further, I am by no means satisfied, that the rules of war would justify our detaching a force to recover our prisoners under the present circumstances. I rather think they would not; but without going into a full discussion of the measure, either upon the principles of war or justice, I am certain that policy strongly forbids the attempt. Success in such case would lead to unhappy consequences. No future prisoners in the hands of the enemy would receive the same favorable indulgence, so essential to their health and comfort, and it would authorize their imposing on them a more close and severe confinement. You are not to infer from hence, that I esteem the recovery of prisoners unjustifiable in all cases, or have any doubts respecting the propriety of it.* I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL GATES.

Morristown, 19 May, 1777.

SIR,

I cannot help taking notice of some expressions in your letters, which appear to me like an imputation of partiality in favor of this army, to the disadvantage and inconvenience of the northern army. Can you suppose, if there had been an ample supply of tents for the whole army, that I would have hesitated one moment in complying with your demand? I told Major Troup

* General Parsons had suggested, that an enterprise against Long Island might be effected from Connecticut, and asked the opinion of General Washington respecting the propriety of attempting to rescue the American prisoners, who were at Flatbush, and in the vicinity of that place. Spies had lately returned, who had made known where the prisoners were stationed, and in what manner the British troops were distributed in different parts of the Island.

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exactly what I repeated in mine of the 15th; "that on account of our loss at Danbury, there would be a scarcity of tents; that our army would be a moving one, and that consequently nothing but tents could serve our turn; and that, therefore, as there was the greatest probability of your being stationary, you should endeavour to cover your troops with barracks and huts." Certainly this was not a refusal of tents, but a request that you should, in our contracted situation, make every shift in your power to do without them, or at least with as few as possible.

The northern army is, and ever has been, as much the object of my care and attention, as the one immediately under my command; and I cannot recollect, that I ever omitted complying with the requests or supplying the wants of the commander in that department, when it lay in my power. As the returns of military stores of all kinds come before me, and as the direction and distribution of them are entrusted to me by Congress, I have endeavoured to apply them in such manner, as would render most effectual service to the public cause, without suffering partiality for either department to have the least influence upon me. I will make particular inquiry of the quartermaster-general concerning his prospect and expectations, as to the article of tents, and if, as I said before, there appears a sufficiency for the whole army, you shall most willingly have your share. But if there is not, surely that army, whose movement is uncertain, must give up its claims for the present to that, which must inevitably take the field the moment the weather will admit, and must continue in it the whole campaign. I am, Sir, &c.

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TO MAJOR COLERUS.

Morristown, 19 May, 1777.

SIR,

I received your letter by Monsieur Malmedy. I am sorry that some of the gentlemen promoted by Congress render themselves unhappy, either by forming in their minds the most groundless suspicions of neglect, or torturing themselves by an unwarrantable degree of jealousy at the promotions of others. It has always been my wish and design, that you should be provided for, as soon as you acquired a competent knowledge of our language to make you fit for command, and as circumstances would admit. When you were here last, I told you that I should try to place you in some corps, as you seemed uneasy at your situation, and expressed a desire of being immediately in service. This was all I meant or promised, nor could you infer more from what I said. There is now a vacant majority in Colonel Hazen's regiment at Princeton, under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Antill, which you may have immediately by repairing thither, and which you will do.

Should this appointment not be equal to your views, I have no other in my power; and I would further observe, that, if you will take a calm and dispassionate view of things, you cannot expect more, upon any principle of reason or justice. I might add, without any disparagement to your merit, that there are many good officers in the service, who have been in it from the commencement of the war, that have not received such honorable marks of favor and distinction. If there are foreigners, who came to America when you did, or since, who have been promoted to higher rank without having better pretensions, it has not been through my interest. Though I wish to see every man rewarded

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according to his deserts, and esteem emulation in officers a laudable quality, yet I cannot but condemn the over sanguine, unjust, ambitious expectations of those, who think every thing should be made to yield to gratify their views. The enclosed letter for Colonel Antill you will be pleased to seal, after you have read it, and deliver it to him on your arrival at Princeton.

I am, Sir, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL McDOUGALL.

Morristown, 23 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I had yesterday the pleasure of yours of the 21st instant. I wish every officer in the army could appeal to his own heart and find the same principles of conduct, that I am persuaded actuate you; we should experience more consistency, zeal, and steadiness, than we now do in but too many instances. A disinterested attachment to the cause, which we are engaged in, can alone produce a line of behaviour, in every circumstance, equal to the importance of it. I perfectly agree with you in the impropriety of that diversity in the modes of training our regiments, which has prevailed hitherto. I have it in contemplation very soon to digest and establish a regular system of discipline, manœuvres, evolutions, and regulations for guards, to be observed throughout the army. In the mean time, I should be glad if you would introduce uniformity among those under your command; and I would recommend to you to be particularly attentive to having them instructed in the proper use of their feet, so as to enable them to perform the necessary movements in marching and forming, with ease, order, agility, and

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expedition. Good consequences would undoubtedly result from accustoming the men to the noise of firing, and to the habit of taking aim at an object. You may therefore bestow a little ammunition on this purpose, having regard to the quantity of this article among us.

Of late several of our officers have broken their paroles and stolen away. This practice, ignominious to themselves, dishonorable to the service, and injurious to the officers of sentiment and delicacy, who remain behind to experience the rigors of resentment and distrust on their account, cannot be tolerated, whatever be the pretence. I have made a point of sending those back, that have come under my observation; and I must desire you will do the same towards those, who fall under yours. The reason commonly assigned for this breach of faith is the want of money and necessaries. I regret that this plea is too well founded; but I hope it will not continue to be so, as effectual measures are taking to provide for the wants of our prisoners.

I am, with esteem, dear Sir, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL STEPHEN.

Morristown, 24 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

No pleasure could exceed what I should feel, if it was in my power to protect every town and every individual on this wide-extended continent. This, however, is a pleasure that never can be realized; and as our dispersed situation is neither formidable for defence nor offence, it becomes me to place the Continental troops in such a manner as to answer a more valuable purpose, than to give the shadow (for it is no more) of security to particular neighbourhoods. Your apprehen-

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sion of the enemy taking possession of Newark and Elizabethtown, with a view of holding them, does not strike me at all. If any such ideas possessed them, the few men we have there would rather be an inducement. They already have experienced the evil of multiplied posts, as we shall do, if they should be seized with a spirit of enterprise. Such guards as we have from Boundbrook to Newark, inclusively, could give no effectual opposition to the enemy, if they were disposed to move; and the country is too much drained by both armies to afford much support. The other consideration of opening the intercourse, or rather making it more open with New York, has weight, but is overbalanced by others of a more powerful nature. In a word, if a man cannot act in all respects as he could wish, he must do what appears best, under the circumstances he is in. This I aim at, however short I may fall of the end. General Heard will move down part of his militia towards Aquackanoc. I am, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 24 May, 1777.

SIR,

I beg leave to inform Congress, that, immediately after the receipt of their resolve of the 26th of March,

* At this time the troops under Washington's immediate command were those from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, and Virginia, in all forty-three regiments, including Hazen's. They were divided into ten brigades, commanded by the Brigadiers Muhlenberg, Weedon, Woodford, Scott, Smallwood, Deborre, Wayne, Dehaas, Conway, Maxwell; and into five divisions, of two brigades each, under the Major-Generals Greene, Stephen, Sullivan, Lincoln, Stirling. The artillery was commanded by Knox. Such was the disposition of the army, when it moved from the winter encampment at Morristown. The New York and eastern troops were chiefly at Peekskill and Ticonderoga.

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recommending the office of adjutant-general to be filled by the appointment of a person of abilities and unsuspected attachment to our cause, I wrote to Colonel Timothy Pickering of Salem, offering him the post in the first instance, and transmitting at the same time a letter for Colonel William Lee, whom Congress had been pleased to mention, to be delivered to him in case my offer could not be accepted. This conduct, in preference of Colonel Pickering, I was induced to adopt from the high character I had of him, both as a great military genius cultivated by an industrious attention to the study of war, and as a gentleman of liberal education, distinguished zeal, and great method and activity in business. This character of him I had from gentlemen of distinction and merit, and on whose judgment I could rely. When my letter reached Colonel Pickering, at first view he thought his situation in respect to public affairs would not permit him to accept the post. That for Colonel Lee he sent immediately to him, who, in consequence of it, repaired to head-quarters. By Colonel Lee I received a letter from Colonel Pickering, stating more particularly the causes, which prevented his accepting the office when it was offered, and assuring me that he would in a little time accommodate his affairs in such a manner as to come into any military post, in which he might be serviceable, and thought equal to.

Here I am to mark with peculiar satisfaction, in justice to Colonel Lee, who has deservedly acquired the reputation of a good officer, that he expressed a distrust of his abilities to fill the appointment intended for him; and, on hearing that Colonel Pickering would accept it, he not only offered but wished to relinquish his claim to it in favor of him, whom he declared he considered, from a very intimate and friendly acquaintance, as a

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first-rate military character; and that he knew no gentleman better or so well qualified for the post among us. Matters being thus circumstanced, and Colonel Lee pleased with the command he was in, I wrote to Colonel Pickering on his return, who accepted the office and is daily expected. In this business I beg Congress to be assured, though Colonel Lee was postponed in the first instance, their recommendation had its due weight; and that no motive, other than a regard to the service, induced me to prefer Colonel Pickering. His acknowledged abilities and equal zeal, without derogating from the merits of Colonel Lee, who holds a high place in my esteem, gave him a preference; and I flatter myself the cause will be promoted in his appointment, especially as we shall have two good officers in lieu of one, who, I am persuaded, will do honor to themselves in the line in which they move.

Considering the passes through the Highlands of the utmost importance to secure, I sent Generals Greene and Knox about a fortnight ago to see what had been done for their defence, and to consult with the general officers they should meet, upon such further measures as might be deemed necessary for their greater safety. The enclosed copy of their report will fully convey their sentiments upon the subject; to which I beg leave to refer Congress. I have sent General Putnam to command in that quarter, and have instructed him to use every means in his power for expediting and effecting the works and obstructions mentioned in the report. Fearing that the cables might not be procured in time, I have directed his particular and immediate attention to fixing the boom. However, as the cables would render that more secure, and will be extremely serviceable in the opinion of the officers, if they are to be had in Philadelphia, I would advise

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Congress to order them to be purchased and forwarded without loss of time; they cannot be got elsewhere. They must be proportioned to the width of the river, which is about five hundred and forty yards; and, as they will be of most use if diagonally laid, the gentlemen think they should not be less than four hundred and fifty fathoms long, and of the largest size that can be had. Unless they are large and substantial, they will answer no purpose, and will not sustain their weight when stretched. I have the honor, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

Morristown, 25 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Would it be practicable, do you think, under the present circumstances and situation of the troops at Peekskill, to surprise the enemy at Kingsbridge? It must be effected by surprise, or not at all, and must be undertaken by water, which would also prove abortive, if the enemy have vessels of any kind above Fort Washington. The undigested ideas, which I have entertained of the matter, are these; to embark a number of troops, supposed adequate to the enterprise, in boats, under pretence of transporting them and their baggage to Tappan, as a more easy and expeditious method of joining the army under my immediate command; to cover this the better, a number of wagons might be ordered to assemble at the landing on this side, in order to receive your baggage. Or, if it should be thought, that moving a body of men so near the enemy would put them too much upon their guard, could not the troops be embarked at Peekskill, under pretence of reinforcing the garrison on the river, in order to expe-

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dite the works, and actually set off as if bound thither; but, under cover of darkness, turn and push down the river? But here, possibly, a difficulty will arise on account of the impracticability of getting down in the night, and the difficulty of being concealed in any creek or inlet on the western shore in the day. These are all matters worthy of consideration, and I have nothing more in view, than to lead you into a train of thinking upon the subject. Let the matter be communicated to Generals McDougall and George Clinton, for their sentiments, but under strong injunctions of secrecy, for it always happens, that, where more than two or three are apprized of an undertaking of this kind, the knowledge of it always gets abroad, which must inevitably defeat any measure that depends upon secrecy.

The place at which I should propose your landing would be in the hollow between Fort Washington and Spiten Devil. It is a good landing-place, and affords a good passage into the road leading from Fort Washington to the bridge. It is very obscure, and would enable you to fall in upon the back of the troops at Fort Independence, by which the surprise would be greater and their retreat cut off. Thence your troops might, or might not, march up by land, and sweep the country before them of the enemy and provisions, as circumstances would justify. After consulting the gentlemen before mentioned on the propriety of this measure, let me know the result by a careful person, and when the plan could conveniently be carried into execution.*

I am, dear Sir, your most affectionate, &c.

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* In a circular from the Commander-in-chief to the brigadier-generals, dated the 26th of May, are the following instructions;—"Let vice and immorality of every kind be discouraged as much as possible in your brigade; and, as a chaplain is allowed to each regiment, see that the men regularly attend divine worship. Gaming of every kind is expressly for-

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL GREENE.

Morristown, 27 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have ordered the assistant-commissary at this place to repair immediately to camp. It is the peculiar misfortune of this army to have, generally speaking, the heads of the different departments always absent, when they are most wanted. Two months was I laboring, as hard as a man could, to get the commissary-general to this place, and had scarcely accomplished it, before the Congress ordered him to Philadelphia; from whence I have used my utmost endeavours to bring him back, but am answered that he is detained by order. In the mean while, the army may starve. I will again send to him by express, and for present supplies advise the adoption of the mode you pointed out, by your taking the provision out of the country about Elizabethtown, Newark, and Millstone, because two ends will be answered by it.

On the road to-day I met a person, who told me that he left New York on Saturday noon; that he was desired to let me know, that a successful attack might be made upon Brunswic; that there were at this time a captain, lieutenant, and two sergeants from New York, among us as spies, in the habit of countrymen; that seventy sail of transports are ready, as he supposes, by this time for sailing; that seven of them were fitted for stores, and had got forage on board; the rest designed for troops, stores, and provisions; Philadelphia the destination talked of; that he understood some transports arrived on Sunday last, with troops from

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bidden, as being the foundation of evil, and the cause of many a brave and gallant officer's ruin. Games of exercise for amusement may not only be permitted but encouraged."

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Newport, but that no other reinforcements had got in, nor any vessels from Europe, except the seventeen provision ships we have already heard of. I hope Colonel Dayton reported to you the suspicious person met with at Bullion's tavern, and that you have had him under examination before this. I am, dear Sir, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 28 May, 1777.

SIR,

The enclosed is a copy of a letter received yesterday from General Howe.* Congress will perceive, by referring to the copy of his letter of the 21st of April transmitted in mine of the 26th, that he persevered in his demand for an equal number of prisoners to be returned for those sent out by him; which has been the subject of controversy between us. As General Howe has called upon me again for my final decision upon the subject, and Congress are fully possessed of it, having received transcripts of every paper respecting it, I wish them to take the matter under their earliest consideration, and to inform me as soon as they can, whether the grounds on which it has been conducted by me are agreeable to their ideas, and whether my objections are or are not to be departed from. The affair is particularly stated in my letter of the 9th ultimo to General Howe, in answer to the paper addressed to me by Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott; copies of which were enclosed in my letter to the President on the 10th of the same month. The dispute, so far as General Lee is concerned, rests at present on their declaring him

* See APPENDIX, No. XV. The letter is dated May 22d.

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exchangeable, as other prisoners are, on the principle of equality of rank; to ensure which, or his safety, Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers are detained. The other objection to returning their prisoners is, that a great proportion of those sent out by them were not fit subjects of exchange when released, and were made so by the severity of their treatment and confinement, and therefore a deduction should be made from the list.

Good faith seems to require, that we should return as many of theirs at least as we received effectives from them; I mean such as could be considered capable of being exchanged; and perhaps sound policy, that the agreement subsisting for exchanges should continue. On the other hand it may be said, that our prisoners in general, in the enemy's hands at present, will have greater security by our retaining them, and that General Howe will be less apt to relinquish any part of his claim, the more the number in our hands is diminished by an exchange.

I confess I am under great difficulty in this business. But what is more particularly the cause of this application, is the latter part of the first paragraph of the enclosed copy, — "*and for your determination respecting the prisoners now here, that I may make my arrangements accordingly.*" This is couched in terms of great ambiguity; and I am really at a loss what interpretation to give it; whether he intends that his conduct respecting them shall be as I advise (this appears more favorable than can well be expected), or that, if the previous demand is not answered in a satisfactory manner, he shall consider them on a different footing from that on which our former prisoners were, and the agreement totally dissolved. We are told government offered the prisoners they took to the India Company, and they

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have procured an act dispensing with that of the *habeas corpus* in particular cases of persons supposed inimical to them. How far they or their commanders may adopt these measures, remains to be known. I have only mentioned them as they respect the general subject of my letter.

Notwithstanding my recommendation, agreeably to what I conceived to be the sense of Congress, Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell's treatment continues to be such as cannot be justified either on the principles of generosity or strict retaliation; as I have authentic information, and I doubt not you will have the same, that General Lee's situation is far from being rigorous or uncomfortable. Except his not being permitted to go at large on parole, he has reason to be content with every other circumstance of his treatment.

I am just moving to Boundbrook, from whence I returned yesterday morning. On Monday morning a body of the enemy advanced near that post. They retreated, on seeing a detachment march to meet them. There was some firing at long shot, but without any great damage. We had only three men slightly wounded. What their loss was, I know not; three of their light-horse were killed. By advices from the eastward, the troops are coming from Rhode Island.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO BRIGADIER-GENERAL PARSONS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 29 May, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I was just now favored with your letter of the 25th by Major Humphreys. The intelligence communicated by it is truly interesting and agreeable, and now I shall

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take occasion, not only to give you my hearty approbation of your conduct in planning the expedition to Long Island, but to return my sincere thanks to Lieutenant-Colonel Meigs and to all officers and men engaged in it. This enterprise, so fortunate in the execution, will greatly distress the enemy in the important and essential article of forage, and reflects much honor on those, who performed it. I shall ever be happy to reward merit when in my power, and therefore wish you to inquire for a vacant ensigncy in some of the regiments for Sergeant Ginnings, to which you will promote him, advising me of the same and the time.*

As I could only repeat what I have said in my former letters to you and to Governor Trumbull, on the subject of his and the Assembly's request for part of the troops to remain in Connecticut, it is unnecessary for me to say more respecting it, than that I cannot possibly comply with it at this time. The passes and fortifications in the Highlands are of the last importance, and every means in our power must be employed to secure them.

* This enterprise was one of the most spirited and successful of the Revolution. Lieutenant-Colonel Meigs embarked from New Haven on the 21st of May, with two hundred and thirty-four men in thirteen whale-boats. He proceeded to Guilford, but on account of the roughness of the sea he could not pass the Sound till the 23d. On that day, about one o'clock in the afternoon, he left Guilford with one hundred and seventy men, under convoy of two armed sloops, and crossed the Sound to Southhold, where he arrived at six o'clock. The enemy's troops on this part of the Island had marched for New York two days before; but it was reported, that there was a party at Sag Harbour, on the south branch of the Island, and about fifteen miles distant. Colonel Meigs ordered the whale-boats to be transported over land to the bay, between the north and south branches of the Island, where one hundred and thirty men embarked, and at twelve o'clock at night they arrived safely on the other side of the bay, within four miles of Sag Harbour.

Here the boats were secured in a wood under a guard, and the remainder of the detachment marched quickly to the Harbour, where they arrived at two o'clock, in the greatest order, attacking the outposts with fixed bayonets, and proceeding directly to the shipping at the wharf

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If the enemy's movements, which most probably will be understood in a little time, should be such as to show that Hudson's River is not their object, and the state of the troops will admit, I shall with great pleasure post a part of them about White Plains and Stamford, and give every protection I can to Connecticut, consistent with the general interest; but till these events take place, neither prudence nor policy will justify me in sparing men. You will, agreeably to my request, repair to Peekskill after making the necessary orders about the troops. I am, with great esteem, &c.

TO PATRICK HENRY, GOVERNOR OF VIRGINIA.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 31 May, 1777.

SIR,

I this morning received information, which I believe is not to be doubted, that on Saturday last a large fleet, consisting of a hundred sail, left New York and stood out to sea. Whither they are destined, or what they

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The alarm was given, and an armed schooner with twelve guns and seventy men began to fire upon them at the distance of one hundred and fifty yards, which continued for three quarters of an hour; but it did not prevent the troops from executing their design with the greatest intrepidity and effect. Twelve brigs and sloops, one of which was an armed vessel with twelve guns, one hundred and twenty tons of hay, corn, oats, ten hogsheads of rum, and a large quantity of merchandise were entirely destroyed. Six of the enemy were killed and ninety taken prisoners. No one of Colonel Meigs's men was either killed or wounded. He returned to Guilford at two o'clock in the afternoon of the 24th, having been absent only twenty-five hours, and in that time transported his troops full ninety miles by land and water, and completed his undertaking with the most entire success. — General Parsons's *MS. Letter, May 25th.* Congress voted that a sword should be presented to Lieutenant-Colonel Meigs, as a token of their sense of the "prudence, activity, enterprise, and valor," with which this expedition had been conducted. — *Journals, June 25th.* The Commander-in-chief also published the event with applause in general orders.

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had on board, remains to be known. If possessing Hudson's River should not be General Howe's first object, I should suppose his operations will be against Philadelphia, and that this fleet, if they have troops on board, are bound into the Delaware Bay. Though this is my opinion, yet I would take the liberty of suggesting, that it may be expedient to put your militia upon the most respectable footing, that circumstances will admit, lest their destination should be more southwardly. At the same time that I mention this, I would advise, that they should be immediately supplied with ammunition, or that it be so deposited in the hands of the several committees, or other proper persons, that it may be had upon the most sudden emergency. The former would be by far the most eligible mode, if they would keep it for the purposes for which it was given.

Should this fleet arrive on your coast, and the enemy attempt to penetrate the country, or to make incursions, I would recommend, that the earliest opposition be made by parties and detachments of militia, without waiting to collect a large body. I am convinced, that this would be attended with the most salutary consequences, and that greater advantages would be derived from it, than by deferring the opposition, till you assemble a number equal to that of the enemy. By pursuing this mode, they would be much annoyed, and would receive an early impression of the unfavorable disposition of the people towards them. Besides, they would not have the same opportunity of establishing themselves, as they otherwise would; and it may be added, that militia, acting in large bodies, for want of discipline are unwieldy, difficult to conduct, and less apt to render proportionate services. These hints I take the liberty to suggest and submit to you as worthy of attention. In the course of this week, eighteen transports have

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arrived at York with troops, supposed to be foreign, from their uniform. Whether they are immediately from Germany, or those which were in Canada, is a matter of conjecture. Some have imagined the latter would be called to reinforce General Howe.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 31 May, 1777.

SIR,

Monsieur Ducoudray is just arrived at camp, and proposes to set out to-morrow for Philadelphia. What his views are, I am uncertain, having had no conversation with him upon the subject; but I find an idea prevails, that there is an agreement between Mr. Deane and him, that he shall have the chief command of the artillery. How well founded this opinion may be, I cannot determine; but, if it be true, it may involve the most injurious consequences. General Knox, who has deservedly acquired the character of one of the most valuable officers in the service, and who, combating almost innumerable difficulties in the department he fills, has placed the artillery upon a footing that does him the greatest honor, he, I am persuaded, would consider himself injured by an appointment superseding his command, and would not think himself at liberty to continue in the service. Should such an event take place in the present state of things, there would be too much reason to apprehend a train of ills, such as might convulse and unhinge this important department.

Supposing Monsieur Ducoudray to have made such an agreement, the case is of great difficulty, and in my opinion is worthy of the consideration of Congress. Yet

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may not means be still devised to satisfy this gentleman by appointing him to some command not derogatory to his promised rank, and which will be agreeable to him? From the recommendations we have had of him, I am obliged to esteem him of high character, and of great knowledge in what he professes; and, from this consideration and the manner in which he is mentioned to us, it appears that much address and delicacy must be used to conciliate matters. Many reasons, besides those I have noted, might be assigned for continuing General Knox first in command in this department, which, on reflection, will readily occur. I would only observe, without insinuating the most distant shadow of distrust of Monsieur Ducoudray's honor, candor, or integrity, that, on the general maxims of prudence and policy, it may be questioned with much propriety, whether so important a command as that of the artillery should be vested in any but a native, or one attached by the ties of interest to these States. Congress will be pleased to excuse the freedom I have used upon this occasion, and, I trust, will impute it to the importance of the subject which gave rise to it.* I have the honor, &c.

* Soon after Mr. Deane's arrival in France, he was visited by Monsieur Ducoudray, then an officer in the French service, who offered his aid to Mr. Deane in enabling him to procure military supplies, proposing himself to join the American army on certain conditions. It was known that the French government approved these advances on the part of Monsieur Ducoudray, and his proposals were accepted by Mr. Deane. According to the arrangement, Ducoudray was to proceed to America in a vessel freighted with fire-arms, cannon, and other military supplies; and Mr. Deane agreed, that he should have the command of the artillery, and the rank of major-general, with the pay of that rank. Before he left France, however, Mr. Deane became dissatisfied with his conduct, and wrote on the subject to Congress. — See *Diplomatic Correspondence of the American Revolution*, Vol. I. pp. 34, 102. When Ducoudray arrived in Philadelphia, and presented his agreement with Deane and other papers to Congress, they were referred to the Committee on Foreign Applications. It appeared that he had so constructed his plan, that he

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TO RICHARD HENRY LEE.

Middlebrook, 1 June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

By your favor of the 22d ultimo, I perceive my letter of the 17th has been expressed in too strong terms. I did not mean by the words, "to get rid of importunity," to cast the smallest reflection; indeed the hurry with which I am obliged to write the few private letters I attempt, will not allow me to consider the force and tendency of my words; nor should I have been surprised, if the fact had really been so, if I am to judge of their, I mean foreigners' applications to Congress, by those to myself; for it is not one, nor twenty explanations, that will satisfy the cravings of these people's demands.

You will, before this can reach you, have seen Monsieur Ducoudray. What his real expectations are, and what his agreements with Mr. Deane, I know not; but I fear, if his appointment is equal to what I have been told is his expectation, it will be attended with unhappy consequences. To say nothing of the policy of entrusting a department, on the due execution of which the salvation of the army depends, to a foreigner, who has no other tie to bind him to the interests of this country than honor, I would beg leave to observe, that, by putting Monsieur Ducoudray at the head of the artillery, you will lose a very valuable officer in General Knox, who is a man of great military reading, sound judgment, and clear conceptions. He has conducted the affairs of that department with honor to himself, and advantage to the public, and will resign if any one is put over him.

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was to command the engineers as well as the artillery. The affair was suspended, and, in its progress, occasioned a good deal of uneasiness and difficulty, among both the foreign and the native officers.

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My last return of the army will give you our strength, and show the state of the recruiting service, which seems to be at an end. The regiments of Pennsylvania, indeed, appear to be growing worse; and, unless some coercive method can be hit upon to complete the battalions, I see no chance of doing it. General Howe's encouragement, by proclamation, has occasioned great desertions from our army to his, with the loss of arms; this I have represented to Congress, and submitted to them the propriety of offering something back by way of counteraction, but have received no answer; and this, being frequently the case, leaves me often in a very disagreeable state of suspense, from which a simple yea or nay would relieve me.

If some effectual mode is not devised to fill the regiments, it is impossible, at least very unlikely, that any effectual opposition can be given to the British army with the troops we have, whose numbers diminish more by desertion, than they increase by enlistments. I have requested the director-general of the hospital here, as it is properly within his line, to take notice of the report, which you say prevails to the southward concerning the sick, and to remark upon it in the gazettes. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 3 June, 1777.

SIR,

I would take the liberty of addressing a few lines to Congress on a matter, which appears to me of importance, and which is considered in the same light by many of our officers, and others not in the military line. The subject I allude to is the condition of many persons now with the enemy, who, deluded by their

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arts and a misguided attachment to their measures, fled from the protection of the States, to find security with them, and who in many instances are in arms against us. It has been suggested through various channels, and the suggestion seems to be credited, especially as some have already escaped, that many of these unhappy people, convinced of their error and the wicked part they have taken, would embrace the earliest opportunity of leaving the enemy and returning among us, were they sure of being received into our friendship again, and of enjoying their property and the rights of citizens.

This subject, in the consideration of it, strikes me as important, interesting, and delicate, involving many consequences worthy of mature deliberation and attention. As such, and deeming myself incompetent to it, I think it my duty to submit it to Congress for their discussion, to take such measures therein as they shall esteem necessary and right. If these people, particularly those in arms, are ingenuous in what has been hinted, and it is their wish, or that of any considerable part of them, to return, I should suppose it would be expedient, and founded in sound policy, to give every suitable assurance to induce them to come. Such an event would be attended with salutary effects, would weaken the enemy, distress them greatly, and would probably have a most happy influence in preventing others from joining their arms. On the other hand, the indulgence may be liable to great abuse, supposing it not to be duly guarded; or, if the effects produced by it should be partial, they will not be adequate to the ends in view. Yet, as the enemy on their part are using every device they are capable of, to seduce both soldiers and citizens from our service into theirs, and have succeeded but too well, it is generally thought in the military line,

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that something should be attempted to counteract them. Whether Congress will be of the same sentiment, and, if they should, what and how extensive the mode and indulgence ought to be, is entirely with them.

There is one difficulty that occurs to me, supposing the measure to be adopted. What line of discrimination can be drawn upon such an occasion, though circumstances should differ and seem to require it? While the poor, deluded, ignorant, duped by artifices and a thousand causes to lead them wrong, have a claim to their country's pardon and indulgence, there are many of well-informed understanding, who, from their early-avowed hostile dispositions and inveterate disregard of her rights, and those who have taken a double and triple part, cannot have the same pretensions; whose only view in returning may be to serve their own sordid purposes, and the better to promote those plans they have steadily pursued.

One thing more I would observe, which is, that if Congress judge an adoption of measures eligible on the subject of my letter, the sooner it is come into the better, for the most obvious reasons; and the time allowed for those to return, who wish the indulgence, should be fixed at a short period; otherwise they may avail themselves of the circumstance, and wait events to decide their choice. If any good consequences are produced, the means can be renewed and further extended. Congress will be pleased to excuse me for thus freely communicating my sentiments, especially when I assure them that they are dictated by what I esteem my duty. I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 6 June, 1777.

SIR,

I this morning had the honor of your letter of the 5th with its enclosures. The resolution of the 30th of May, respecting the French gentlemen, who came passengers in the Amphitrite, reached camp before your letter, and has excited much uneasiness in the artillery corps. The enclosed copy of a letter from General Knox will convey their anxiety upon the subject; which I think it necessary to transmit, as well from duty as on account of his request. The difficulties upon this occasion arise from the peculiar circumstances of most of the officers composing the artillery regiments at this time. I do not know, for my own part, what operation Congress precisely meant the resolution should have; but if the commissions, which these gentlemen are to receive, should give them rank from the date of those they had from the King of France, or from their compact with Mr. Deane, there are but few officers now in the artillery, who will not be superseded in their command, unless some method is adopted to prevent it. This, I am persuaded, Congress had not in contemplation, because it is opposed to policy and to justice; and I am led to believe the resolution was come into for want of due information how matters were circumstanced in this instance.

The officers now in the artillery I am obliged to consider of great merit. Experience has proved them to be most warmly attached to the rights of their country; and their conduct in the line of their profession has been such, as does the highest honor to themselves and the gentleman who immediately commands them. Without derogating in the least from the charac-

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ter of the French officers, who are to be commissioned, and whom I wish to receive every countenance they merit, there is strong reason to doubt, laying aside every consideration of policy, whether they have seen as much real service as our own in the course of two campaigns. It would be hard, not to say unjust, that the latter should lose their command when they have a claim to every mark of favor, and after they have taken great pains to form their companies. The service requires that they should not; and I am convinced the event would be attended with the most fatal consequences.

But what is to be done? This is a case of difficulty, view it as you will. I am not for rejecting the French gentlemen; far otherwise; I am for employing them; and public faith, and the encouragements given to bring them over, demand that it should be done. After much thought and consideration upon the subject, two modes occur to me, as the only possible ones by which it can be effected, and by which the inconveniences I have mentioned can be remedied. One is, that a new corps of artillery should be formed, and these gentlemen attached to it. This, we have reason to fear, cannot be done, from the difficulties we have experienced in raising men, and from their having no interest or connexions with the people. Their situation in such case, if they are men of sentiment and active dispositions, would be irksome and distressing. The other is, that our present officers now under consideration should have their commissions antedated, to give them precedency of rank; and this may be done with the greater propriety, as most of them were intended to hold the posts they now sustain, before the French gentlemen had any claim upon us. It is true they were not commissioned, because the old corps existed under the first arrangement.

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Further it is said, and there is no doubt of the fact, that these gentlemen were promoted by brevet just before their departure from France, merely to give them rank here; antecedent to which, our officers were superior to them in this point; and these brevets only confer local rank, confined to the French-American colonies. This latter mode appears the most eligible. If it is adopted, they will be distributed through the corps as assistant officers. Their want of a knowledge in our language incapacitates them for command in the first instance; and not only so, but to place them at the head of companies, over officers that have been at great trouble, pains, and expense in raising the men, would be both unmilitary and unjust.

I shall now quit the subject, wishing that whatever will best conciliate matters, and advance the public good, may be done; suggesting at the same time with all deference, that, as it is much easier to prevent evils, than to remedy them after they have happened, it will be well, in all cases of foreign and indeed other applications, that the consequences, which granting them will involve, should be maturely weighed and taken in every point of view. In the present case of difficulty, things, I am persuaded, might have been adjusted with the greatest facility, had the Committee of Foreign Applications been fully possessed of all the circumstances respecting the artillery regiments. I have the honor, &c.*

* The French officers above alluded to were those, who came to America under the auspices of Ducoudray. They had received brevet commissions from the French government, which were dated in November and December, 1776. By the new arrangement of the army, the commissions of the American artillery officers, of the same rank, were dated January 1st, 1777. By the resolve of Congress, on the 30th of May, blank commissions were to be sent to General Washington, with the direction to fill them up according to the list forwarded, and with the additional clause, that "the rank of each class of the said officers should

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.

Middlebrook, 7 June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I imagine, that since General Schuyler's departure from Philadelphia you command there.* I therefore enclose to you the evidence of a person very lately from New York, from which, as well as from other information, it appears that a fleet is upon the point of sailing from that place. If Philadelphia should be the point of destination, they will make their appearance in Delaware Bay soon after they leave the Hook. I therefore desire, that you will, as soon as you are certain that the fleet is in the Bay, give me the earliest notice, by the expresses that are posted on the road between this place and Philadelphia. Before you send notice to me, be sure that you are not deceived by the signal guns, which I am told have been fired several times without any grounds for so doing. A move of this army

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be settled by the date of their commissions from the King of France." The obvious construction of these words led to the inference, that the American officers were all to rank below these appointments. But Congress removed the obscurity, and set the matter in a proper light, by a subsequent resolve, that the relative rank of the French officers among themselves only was intended, and that their commissions were to bear date on the day when they should be filled by General Washington.—*Journals, June 10th.* Ducoudray's list of officers consisted of six captains and twelve lieutenants, besides his aid, who was an American.

* Arnold arrived in Philadelphia soon after General Schuyler was directed by Congress to resume the command of the Northern Department; and although his claims about rank were not adjusted, nor his accounts settled, yet he acceded to the request of Congress to become the successor of General Schuyler at that place. As the enemy were now supposed to be menacing Philadelphia, this post was one of great importance. It not only embraced a command of the Continental troops and militia assembled and assembling on the west side of the Delaware, but also the preparations for defence, both in obstructing the river below the city, and in guarding its banks and crossing-places above, as far up as Coryell's Ferry.

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upon a false alarm might prove fatal. Could not you and General Sullivan contrive to give each other notice by signals? We can do it by making lights upon the heights near Princeton and at this place; but I am afraid it will be difficult between Princeton and Philadelphia, because the ground is low. I am, &c.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL HOWE.

Middlebrook, 10 June, 1777.

SIR,

Your several letters of the 21st of April, 22d of May, and 5th instant, have been received.* Having stated my sentiments in an explicit manner in my letter of the 9th of April, upon the subject of your demand and the disagreement between us, I thought it unnecessary to trouble you with a repetition of them. From the complexion of yours of the 21st of April, we appeared to differ so widely, that I could entertain no hopes of a compromise being effected, or that an answer would produce any good end. But, as you have called upon me again for my final determination upon the matter, I shall freely give it, after making some observations upon what you have said, with the intention to obviate the objections on my part to a compliance with your demand through Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott.

You admit the principle, upon which my objection to account for the whole number of prisoners sent out by you is founded, but deny the application, by delicately insinuating, in the first instance, that the ill treatment complained of, was "an expedient to cherish popular delusion," and by asserting, in the second, "that, sup-

* These letters are contained in the APPENDIX, NOS. XIV. XV.

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posing their sufferings to have been real, they were to be ascribed to other causes, than those assigned by me." I shall not undertake to determine, on whom the charge of endeavouring to excite popular delusion falls with most propriety; but I cannot forbear intimating, that, however successful ingenious miscolorings may be, in some instances, to perplex the understanding in matters of speculation, yet it is difficult to persuade mankind to doubt the evidence of their senses, and the reality of those facts, for which they can appeal to them. Unless this can be done, permit me to assure you, it will always be believed, whatever may be suggested to the contrary, that men could not be in a more deplorable situation, than those unhappy sufferers were, who are the subject of our difference. Did I imagine that you, Sir, had any serious scruples on the occasion, I might produce, in support of what I have alleged, the strongest proofs that human testimony can afford.

To prove that the prisoners did not suffer from any ill treatment or neglect of yours, you say, "they were confined in the most airy buildings and on board the largest transports in the fleet; that they were supplied with the same provisions, both in quantity and quality, as were allowed to your troops not on service; that the sick, such of them as required peculiar care, were received into the British hospitals, and the rest attended by their own surgeons, who were supplied with medicines without restriction, till it was discovered, that they disposed of large quantities by private sale." That airy buildings were chosen to confine our men in, is a fact I shall not dispute. But, whether this was an advantage, or not, in the winter season, I leave it to you to decide. I am inclined to think it was not, especially as there was a general complaint, that they were destitute of fire the greater part of the time, and were only pre-

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vented from feeling the inclemency of the weather, in its extremest rigor, by their crowded situation. This, I must believe, was not very conducive to their health; and, if we may judge by comparison, we must conclude that they endured similar inconveniences on board the transports.

As to the supplies of provisions, I know not what they were. My ideas of the matter were drawn from their united testimony, confirmed by their appearance, which represented the allowance as insufficient in quantity, bad in quality, and irregularly served. You yourself mention some "accidental instances of omission." I apprehend they were much more frequent, than you were apprized of. It may not be improper to observe, that there is a material difference between persons confined and deprived of every means of subsistence, in aid of their allowance, and those who are at large and have other resources, as is the case with your troops when not on service, who have the benefit of their pay, and what they can occasionally gain by their labor. You might also find from inquiry, that we made no distinction in our supplies, between your soldiers, prisoners with us, and our own in the field. They were not stinted to a scanty pittance, but had as much as they could use, and of the best kind. In respect to the attention paid to the sick, I am sorry their accommodation was injured, in any degree, by the misconduct of the surgeons. I heartily join with you in reprobating their proceedings, and shall esteem it a favor, if you will point out the persons, and furnish me with such proofs of their guilt as you may be possessed of.

The more effectually to exonerate yourself from the consequences imputed to the neglect or ill treatment of the prisoners, you assert they had every comfort and assistance from you, that your situation would admit of;

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and that they wanted nothing but money and clothing, which ought to have been furnished by me. Had we left your prisoners with us to depend entirely upon the supplies they drew immediately from you, their condition would have been little better than ours in your hands. Your officers and soldiers can both inform you, that they experienced every mark of public and private generosity, that could be shown them. Frequent instances might be adduced, that, on notice of your men being in want, orders were immediately given, that necessaries should immediately be procured for them. Every thing was done, on our part, to facilitate any steps you took for the same end.

You were permitted to have an agent amongst us, countenanced by public authority, and allowed every latitude he could wish to enable him to execute his office. I am sorry to say, the same conduct has not been observed towards us; and that there are instances to show, that, far from endeavouring to remove the difficulties, which necessarily lay in our way, in making such ample supplies as we could wish, obstacles have been made, that might very well have been waved. A late instance of this is to be found in your refusing to let us have a procuring agent with you, who might purchase what was necessary to supply the wants of our men. You must be sensible, that, for want of a regular mode being adjusted for mutually conveying supplies, there was a necessity for an exercise of generosity on both sides. This was done by us, and we expected it would have been done by you, which made us less anxious in providing, than we should have been, had we foreseen what has really happened. We ascribed every deficiency on your part to the indeterminate situation of affairs in this respect; and, looking forward to a more provident arrangement of the matter,

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we thought it our duty not to let the prisoners with us be destitute of any thing requisite for their preservation, and imagined that your reasonings and feelings would have been the same.

Your saying that we were frequently advised of their distress is of little avail. It was not done, till it was too late to remedy the ill consequences of the past neglect, nor till our prisoners were already reduced to a miserable extremity. I wish their sufferings may not have been increased in the article of clothing, by their being deprived of what they had, through the rapacity of too many of their captors. Reports of this kind have not been wanting.

You further observe, that my own experience would suggest whether our army, in the course of the last campaign, was not subject to the same calamitous mortality with the prisoners in your possession. I cannot but confess, that there was a great degree of sickness among us; but I can assure you, that the mortality bore no kind of resemblance to that, which was experienced by the prisoners with you; and the disorders in the camp had nearly ceased before the captivity of a large proportion of them. The garrison, that fell into your hands on the 16th of November, was found, I am convinced, in perfect health.

In reply to my intimation, that it would have been happy, if the expedient of sending out our men had been earlier thought of, you are pleased to say, "that the event has proved the caution with which you ought to have adopted the measure." What inference can be drawn from my refusing to account for prisoners, scarcely alive, and by no means in an exchangeable condition, to warrant an insinuation, that I should have done the same, had they been released under different circumstances, let your own candor determine. But

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then you ask, "How is the cause of debility in prisoners to be ascertained?" This seems to be considered a perplexing question. For my part, I cannot view it as involving any great difficulty. There is no more familiar mode of reasoning, than from effects to causes, even in matters of the most interesting importance. In the subject before us, the appearance of the prisoners, and what eventually happened, proved that they had been hardly dealt with; but their joint asseverations, aided by the information of others not interested in their distress, more than as they regarded the rights of humanity, established the fact too firmly for incredulity itself to doubt it.

I should hardly believe you to be serious in your application of the exception, to which you allude, to the case of Major-General Lee, if you had not persisted in a discrimination respecting him. I did not entertain the most distant idea, that he could have been supposed to come under the description contained in it; and to force such a construction upon that gentleman's circumstances, however it may be an evidence of ingenuity, is but an indifferent specimen of candor. I still adhere to what I have already advanced on this head. I can by no means think of departing from it.

I am now to give you my final decision on the subject of your demands. In doing this, I can do little more than repeat what I have already said. I am extremely desirous of a general exchange, on liberal and impartial principles; and it is with great concern I find, that a matter, so mutually interesting, is impeded by unnecessary obstacles. But I cannot consent to its taking place, on terms so disadvantageous as those you propose, and which appear to me so contrary to justice and the spirit of our agreement. I think it proper to declare, that I wish the difference between us to be adjusted

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on a generous and equitable plan, and I mean not to avail myself of the releasement of the prisoners to extort any thing from you not compatible with the strictest justice. Let a reasonable proportion of prisoners to be accounted for be settled, and General Lee declared exchangeable, when we shall have an officer of equal rank in our possession. I ask no more. These things being done, I shall be happy to proceed to a general exchange. But, in the mean time, I am willing, that a partial one should take place for the prisoners now in your hands, as far as those in ours will extend, excepting with respect to Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers, who will be detained till you recognise General Lee as a prisoner of war, and put him on the footing I claim. This latter proposition I am induced to make, from the distinction which your letter of the 22d of May seems to hold forth; and I think it necessary to add, that your conduct towards prisoners will govern mine.

The situation of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, as represented by you, is such as I neither wished nor approve. Upon the first intimation of his complaints, I wrote upon the subject, and hoped there would have been no further cause of uneasiness. That gentleman, I am persuaded, will do me the justice to say, he has received no ill treatment at my instance. Unnecessary severity and every species of insult I despise, and, I trust, none will ever have just reason to censure me in this respect. I have written again on your remonstrance, and have no doubt such a line of conduct will be adopted, as will be consistent with the dictates of humanity and agreeable to both his and your wishes.

I am, Sir, &c.*

* Before this letter was written, Congress had approved the course hitherto pursued by General Washington, in regard to the exchange of

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TO COLONEL DANIEL MORGAN.

Middlebrook, 13 June, 1777.

SIR,

The corps of rangers nearly formed, and under your command, are to be considered as a body of light-infantry, and are to act as such; for which reason they will be exempted from the common duties of the line. At present you are to take post at Van Vechten's Bridge, and, with very small scouting parties, to avoid fatiguing your men too much under the present appearance of things, watch the enemy's left flank, and particularly the roads leading from Brunswic towards Millstone and Princeton. In case of any movement of the enemy, you are instantly to fall upon their flank, and gall them as much as possible, taking especial care not to be surrounded, or have your retreat to the army cut off.

I have sent for spears, which I expect shortly to receive and deliver to you, as a defence against horse; till you are furnished with these, take care not to be caught in such a situation, as to give them an advantage over you.

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prisoners; but expressed their determined purpose, by a new resolve, to put in rigid practice the law of retaliation, till the prisoners in the hands of the enemy should be properly treated.

Mr. Robert Morris had been an agent for transmitting money to General Lee. He received a letter from that officer, dated May 19th, in which he wrote; "The two small bills remain as yet unpaid, but I have no occasion for money at present, as my table is very handsomely kept by the General, who has indeed treated me in all respects with kindness, generosity, and tenderness." Mr. Morris read this letter to Congress, whereupon it was resolved, that the Council of Massachusetts and the Governor of Virginia should be informed of the condition of General Lee, and the former be requested to treat Colonel Campbell, and the latter the five Hessian officers, with kindness, generosity, and tenderness, consistent with the safe custody of their persons.—*Journals, June 2d.*

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It occurs to me, that, if you were to dress a company or two of true woodsmen in the Indian style, and let them make the attack with screaming and yelling, as the Indians do, it would have very good consequences, especially if as little as possible were said or known of the matter beforehand. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Head-Quarters, Middlebrook, 16 June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The account brought by the officers from Canada may not be entirely true, but that part which speaks of the removal of some regiments down the river favors an opinion, that I have for some time entertained; which is, that, if General Howe had not a certainty of a full reinforcement from England, part of the troops from Canada would be ordered round for that purpose. That the European reinforcement will be short, or very late, is beyond a doubt, and therefore the move from Canada the more probable.

On the night of the 13th General Howe began his march from Brunswic, seemingly with an intention to push directly for Delaware. In the course of the night, his front reached Somerset Court-House, eight or nine miles from Brunswic, where he halted, and has remained ever since. His rear is still at Brunswic. I do not know whether this was intended as a real move towards Philadelphia, or whether it is to endeavour to draw us down from the heights we occupy along his whole front.*

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* Sir William Howe, in describing this movement, says that his only object was to bring the American army to a general action. — *Letter to Lord G. Germain, July 5th.* His plan had for some time been settled to proceed to Pennsylvania by water.

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The militia turn out in a very spirited manner, and seem determined, in conjunction with the Continental troops, to harass and oppose the enemy upon their march through the country. His principal difficulty will be in crossing the Delaware. We shall hang heavily upon his rear, and I expect that Generals Arnold and Mifflin will meet him with a considerable force, made up of Continental troops and militia, upon the western side of the Delaware. As soon as I found that the enemy had drawn their force into Jersey, from whence they could not remove it, without a good deal of previous notice, I ordered down all the troops from Peekskill except one thousand effective Continentals and the militia, which is a force superior to any that the enemy now have in New York or its dependencies, and therefore fully sufficient to prevent any surprise. When these troops come down, our army will be respectable, and I hope not only able to check, but to make an impression upon some part of the enemy's line. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARNOLD.*

Middlebrook, 17 June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

You mention a want of intelligence respecting my situation, and that of the enemy. As to mine, the main body of our army is encamped at Middlebrook, and a considerable body under General Sullivan at Sourland Hills. The position here is very strong, and with a little labor, which will be bestowed upon it, will be

* As soon as the news reached Philadelphia, that General Howe was moving to Brunswic, Congress ordered General Arnold to Trenton; and he was now at Coryell's Ferry, taking measures to prevent the enemy from passing the Delaware, should such an attempt be in view.

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rendered a great deal more so. The passes in the mountains are for the most part extremely difficult, and cannot be attempted with any degree of propriety. Our right is our most accessible and weakest part, but two or three redoubts will render it as secure as could be wished. The enemy are strongly posted, having their right at Brunswic and their left at Somerset. Besides being well fortified on their right, they have the Rariton all along their front, and the Millstone on their left. In this situation an attack upon them would not be warranted by a sufficient prospect of success, and might be attended with the most ruinous consequences. My design therefore is to collect all the force, that can properly be drawn from other quarters, at this post, so as to reduce the security of this army to the greatest possible certainty, and to be in a condition of embracing any fair opportunity that may offer to make an advantageous attack upon them. In the mean time, I intend by light bodies of militia, countenanced by a few Continental troops, to harass them, and weaken their numbers by continual skirmishes.

I have ordered all the Continental troops at Peekskill, except the number requisite for the security of the post, to hasten on to this army,* and shall draw a part of General Sullivan's troops to reinforce our right; leaving the rest at and about Sourland Hills to gall the flank and rear of the enemy; with orders, in case of any movement towards us, to endeavour to form a junc-

* General Putnam was ordered, June 12th, to send forward Generals Parsons, McDougall, and Glover, with all the Continental troops at Peekskill, except one thousand effective men; which number, in conjunction with the militia and convalescents at that post, was deemed equal to the number of the enemy on the east side of the Hudson. The above detachments were ordered to march in three divisions, each to follow one day's march behind the other, and each of the first two divisions to be attended by two pieces of artillery.

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tion, or, if this should not be practicable, to fall briskly upon their rear and flank. The views of the enemy must be to destroy this army, and get possession of Philadelphia. I am, however, clearly of opinion, that they will not move that way, till they have endeavoured to give a severe blow to this army. The risk would be too great to attempt to cross a river, where they must expect to meet a formidable opposition in front, and would have such a force as ours in their rear. They might possibly be successful, but the probability would be infinitely against them. Should they be imprudent enough to do it, I shall keep close upon their heels, and do every thing in my power to make the project fatal to them. But besides the argument for their intending, in the first place, a stroke at this army, drawn from the policy of the measure, all appearances coincide to confirm the opinion. Had they designed for the Delaware in the first instance, they would probably have made a secret, rapid march for it, and not halted, as they have done, to awaken our attention, and give us time to prepare for obstructing them. Instead of that, they have only advanced to a position necessary to facilitate an attack upon our right, which is the part they have the greatest likelihood of injuring us in; and, added to this consideration, they have come out as light as possible, leaving all their baggage, provisions, boats, and bridges at Brunswic; which plainly contradicts the idea of pushing for the Delaware.

It is a happy circumstance, that such an animation prevails among the people. I would wish to let it operate and draw as many as possible together, which will be a great discouragement to the enemy, by showing that the popular spirit is at such a height; and at the same time it will inspire the people themselves with confidence in their own strength, by discovering to

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every individual the zeal and spirit of his neighbours. But after they have been collected a few days, I would have the greater part of them dismissed, as not being immediately wanted, desiring them to hold themselves in readiness for any sudden call, and concerting signals with them, at the appearance of which they are to fly to arms. I would have every means taken to engage two thousand of them for a month, or as much longer as they can be induced to consent to. In this case they will be able to render essential service, both by an addition of strength for the present, and by lessening the fatigue and duty of the Continental army, which will tend to preserve them both in health and spirits. You will send forward all the Continental troops by a safe route, as fast as they arrive. But you need send over no more of the militia till further orders. I approve of your fortifying such places, as you judge most likely to frustrate any attempt of the enemy to pass the river. I am, with great regard, dear Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Middlebrook, 20 June, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

Supposing the plan mentioned in Amsbury's evidence to be true, I cannot conceive that it will be in the power of the enemy to carry it into execution; but, to provide against all events, I have ordered General Putnam to hold four Massachusetts regiments in readiness at Peekskill, to go up the river at a moment's warning, and to order sloops from Albany, which are to be kept for that purpose.* It does not appear that Burgoyne

* A person by the name of Amsbury had been taken up as a spy from Canada, brought before General Schuyler at Saratoga, and exam-

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has brought any reinforcements from Europe. If this be so, he cannot move with a greater force than five thousand men. He certainly will never leave the garrison of Ticonderoga in his rear; and, if he invests it to any purpose, he will not have a sufficient number left to send one body from Oswego and another to cut off the communication between Fort Edward and Fort George. As the garrison at Ticonderoga is sufficient to hold it against any attack, I do not think it politic, under your representation of the scarcity of provisions, to send up troops to consume what ought to be thrown into the fort. Those troops held ready by General Putnam can always, upon a certainty of the enemy's intention to pass by Ticonderoga with the whole or part of their force, be up time enough with the assistance of the militia to give them a check, as their march cannot be a very rapid one.

I draw a very favorable omen from the intercepted letter to General Sullivan. It shows that they despair of carrying their schemes by force, and are reduced to the necessity of having recourse to the arts of flattery, bribery, and intimidation. ´ The General is not at this post; I therefore cannot say how far it may be agreeable to him, for you to carry on the correspondence in his name. If your letter has not gone, you had better

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ined. He stated, that the British forces were approaching St. John's, and were to advance under General Burgoyne; and also that a detachment of British troops, Canadians, and Indians, was to penetrate the country by way of the Mohawk River. He added other particulars, respecting the strength and arrangements of the British army, which turned out to be nearly accurate, but of which no intelligence had before been obtained or anticipated; for it had been a favorite idea with Congress and the Commander-in-chief, that the British would not operate in force from Canada during the present campaign, but that the troops would be chiefly brought round by water to reinforce General Howe. Hence the small preparations for the defence of Ticonderoga, and for forming a northern army.

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wait for his concurrence, for it is a delicate matter.* You may remember the conversation we had upon the expediency of removing all the horses and carriages from the neighbourhood of Skenesborough; for I cannot conceive that they have enough of their own to answer their purpose. Deprived of the means of transportation, they will be entirely baffled in their attempt upon that quarter.

Since I began this letter, yours of the 14th came to hand, the contents of which are fully answered by what I have before written. I shall immediately forward the letter to Congress. It is evident from General St. Clair's letter, that it will not be proper to order up the reinforcement before it is really wanted; for he very judiciously observes, that they will consume the stores. I cannot conceive what occasions the delay of the Massachusetts and New Hampshire Continental troops; I have repeatedly written, in the most pressing manner, to have them sent on, but in vain. I however hope that your representations, as you are on the spot, will have a better effect. General Knox tells me, that he intends the majority in Crane's regiment for Major Stevens; which would have been confirmed some time ago, had there not been one captain, who in point of rank but not of merit has a prior right. But he hopes to settle the matter with him. I am, &c.

* Amsbury the spy told General Schuyler, in the course of his examination, that, before he left Montreal, a certain Judge Levius gave to him a canteen, with directions to put it into the hands of General Sullivan, whom he supposed to command at Ticonderoga, and to request General Sullivan to remove a false bottom in the canteen, under which he would find a letter. The canteen had been accidentally left by Amsbury at Fort George; but it was sent for, and brought to General Schuyler, who found the letter concealed in the manner described. He enclosed it to General Washington, by whom it was forwarded to General Sullivan. The letter was a shallow contrivance to try the fidelity and patriotism of an American general.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 20 June, 1777.

SIR,

When I had the honor of addressing you last, I informed you that the main body of the enemy had marched from Brunswic, and extended their van as far as Somerset Court-House. I am now to acquaint you, that, after encamping between these two posts and beginning a line of redoubts, they changed their ground yesterday morning and in the course of the preceding night, and returned to Brunswic again, burning, as they went, several valuable dwelling-houses. We had constantly light troops hovering round them as far as circumstances would permit; but, being secured on their flanks by the Rariton and Millstone, they were difficult to approach; and, without loss, they effected their return to their former posts. This sudden and precipitate change in their operations has afforded matter for much speculation. We suppose their original design was to attempt an impression on our right, or to manœuvre us out of our ground, or to advance towards the Delaware. Whether these conjectures were well founded, cannot be ascertained; but it is probable, if they had an impression in view, they found it could not be attempted without great loss (as to bringing on an attack, they effectually secured themselves against one by the post they took); or, if passing the Delaware was their object, that, from the temper of the people, the prosecution of it, if not impracticable, would meet with much greater opposition than they expected; for I must observe, and with peculiar satisfaction I do it, that, on the first notice of the enemy's movements, the militia assembled in the most spirited manner, firmly determined to give them every annoyance in their power, and to afford us

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every possible aid. This I thought it my duty to mention in justice to their conduct; and I am inclined to believe that General Howe's return, thus suddenly made, must have been in consequence of the information he received, that the people were flying to arms in every quarter to oppose him. I shall not reason upon this event; but I cannot but consider it as a most fortunate and happy one to us, and the most distressing Mr. Howe has yet experienced, unless he has schemes in contemplation beyond the reach of my conjecture.

I should have written to Congress more frequently respecting the enemy after they came from Brunswic, had I not been almost constantly on horse-back, and had their designs been clear; but as they were not, I did not wish to puzzle them with conjectures, more especially as I wrote to General Arnold (with whom I was obliged to correspond, that he might coöperate with me as circumstances should require) to transmit to them copies of my letters. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Middlebrook, 11 o'clock, P. M., 22 June, 1777.

SIR,

I have the honor and pleasure to inform you, that the enemy evacuated Brunswic this morning and retired to Amboy, burning many houses as they went along. Some of them, from the appearance of the flames, were considerable buildings. From several pieces of information, and from a variety of circumstances, it was evident that a movement was in agitation, and it was the general opinion that it was intended this morning. I therefore detached three brigades under the command

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of Major-General Greene to fall upon their rear, and kept the main body of the army paraded upon the heights, to support them if there should be occasion. A party of Colonel Morgan's regiment of light-infantry attacked and drove the Hessian picket about sunrise; and, upon the appearance of General Wayne's brigade and Morgan's regiment (who got first to the ground) opposite Brunswic, the enemy immediately crossed the bridge to the east side of the river, and threw themselves into redoubts, which they had before constructed. Our troops advanced briskly upon them; upon which they quitted the redoubts without making any opposition, and retired by the Amboy road.

As all our troops, from the difference of their stations in camp, had not come up when the enemy began to move off, it was impossible to check them; as their numbers were far greater than we had any reason to expect, being, as we were informed afterwards, between four and five thousand men. Our men pursued them as far as Piscataway; but finding it impossible to overtake them, and fearing they might be led on too far from the main body, they returned to Brunswic. By information of the inhabitants, General Howe, Lord Cornwallis, and General Grant, were in the town when the alarm was first given; but they quitted it very soon after.

In the pursuit, Colonel Morgan's riflemen exchanged several sharp fires with the enemy, which, it is imagined, did considerable execution. I am in hopes that they afterwards fell in with General Maxwell, who was detached last night with a strong party, to lie between Brunswic and Amboy to intercept any convoys or parties that might be passing; but I have yet heard nothing from him. General Greene desires me to make mention of the conduct and bravery of General Wayne and

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Colonel Morgan, and of their officers and men, upon this occasion, as they constantly advanced upon an enemy far superior to them in numbers, and well secured behind strong redoubts. General Sullivan advanced from Rocky Hill to Brunswic with his division; but, as he did not receive his order of march till very late at night, he did not arrive till the enemy had been gone some time. I have sent down Lord Stirling's division to reinforce General Maxwell; and in the morning I shall move the main body of the army to some secure post nearer Amboy, from whence we can with more ease annoy the enemy, than from this distance. I am inclined to think they mean to cross to Staten Island; if they do, we may perhaps find an opportunity of making a stroke upon their rear; at any rate we shall have a chance of obliging them to make a total evacuation of the State of Jersey.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp at Quibbletown, 25 June, 1777.

SIR,

After the evacuation of Brunswic, I determined, with the advice of my general officers, to move the whole army the next morning to this post, where they would be nearer the enemy, and might act according to circumstances. In this I was prevented by rain, and they only moved yesterday morning. I have advanced Lord Stirling's division and some other troops lower down in the neighbourhood of Matuchin meeting-house, and intended to post more there; but found, on reconnoitring the ground, that it was low and disadvantageous, and still more unfavorable through a scarcity of water. These

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reasons, added to that of there not being the smallest prospect of attacking the enemy in Amboy with a probability of success, secured on their flanks by water and in their front by strong redoubts across the neck, would not permit me, either in my own opinion or that of my general officers, to keep any greater body of men in that quarter, where they would have been dispersed, and of consequence extremely insecure.

I have light parties lying close on the enemy's lines, to watch their motions, and who will be ready to act in conjunction with Lord Stirling's division and such other troops as it may be necessary to detach; though I think, and so do the rest of the officers, that no event is likely to take place that will require more, since the idea of forcing their lines, or bringing on a general engagement on their own ground, is universally held incompatible with our interest, and that that number is sufficient to avail us of any advantages we can expect to arise from their retreating from Amboy, supposing notice of the fact should be obtained. Their contiguity to the Sound, and the small distance across it, having boats prepared to pass in, will enable them to get off, should they so incline, against every prudent and justifiable exertion on our part. Whether such is their design, is more than I can positively determine; but there is every reason to believe, that they have been and are transporting their baggage to Staten Island, and making every preparation to embark on board their transports for some new expedition.

Your favor of the 24th I just now received, and am extremely obliged by your cordial congratulations on the enemy's retreat from Brunswic, and favorable interpretation of the event of my conduct. The resolution you did me the honor to transmit shall have my attention. It is much to be regretted, that an express sent off to

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General Maxwell on Saturday night, to inform him of General Greene's movement towards Brunswic, that he might conduct himself accordingly, did not reach him. Whether the express went designedly to the enemy, or was taken, is not known; but there is reason to believe he fell into their hands. If General Maxwell had received the order, there is no doubt but their whole rear-guard would have been cut off. This the enemy confessed themselves, as we are well informed by persons in Bonhamtown. By a reconnoitring party just returned, it is reported as a matter of doubt whether any of the enemy have removed from Amboy; though it is almost certain they have transported a great deal of their baggage. I have the honor to be, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, at Middlebrook, 28 June, 1777.

SIR,

On Thursday morning General Howe advanced with his whole army in several columns from Amboy, as far as Westfield. We are certainly informed, that the troops sent to Staten Island returned the preceding evening, and, it is said, with an augmentation of marines, so that carrying them there was a feint with intention to deceive us. His design in this sudden movement was either to bring on a general engagement upon disadvantageous terms, considering matters in any point of view, or to cut off our light parties, and Lord Stirling's division, which was sent down to support them, or to possess himself of the heights and passes in the mountains on our left. The two last seemed to be the first objects of his attention, as his march was rapid against these parties, and indicated a strong disposition to gain those passes.

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In this situation of affairs it was thought absolutely necessary that we should move our force from the low grounds, to occupy the heights before them; which was effected. As they advanced, they fell in with some of our light parties and part of Lord Stirling's division, with which they had some pretty smart skirmishing, with but very little loss I believe on our side, except in three field-pieces, which unfortunately fell into the enemy's hands; but, not having obtained returns yet, I cannot determine it with certainty; nor can we ascertain what the enemy's loss was. As soon as we had gained the passes, I detached a body of light troops under Brigadier-General Scott, to hang on their flank, and to watch their motions; and have ordered Morgan's corps of riflemen to join him since. The enemy remained at Westfield till yesterday afternoon, when, about three o'clock, they moved towards Samptown, with our light troops in their rear and pursuing. The enemy have plundered all before them, and, it is said, burned some houses.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

Middlebrook, 1 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

At sunset this evening I received your letter of the 30th ultimo. The intelligence contained in the copies of the letters you transmitted is truly important; and it appears almost certain to me, that General Howe and General Burgoyne design, if possible, to unite their attacks and form a junction of their two armies. I approve much of your conduct in ordering Nixon's brigade to be in readiness, and I desire that it may be embarked immediately with their baggage to go for Albany, as soon

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as General Varnum's and General Parsons's brigades are so near Peekskill, that they can arrive to supply their place, before any troops can come up the river and effect a landing, or as soon as a number of militia equal to them can be got in. They will proceed up the river with the utmost despatch, on either of these events happening.

The ships that were at Amboy moved down round Staten Island this morning, and all the troops that were encamped opposite to the town struck their tents and marched off. Upon the whole, there is the strongest reason to conclude that General Howe will push up the river immediately to coöperate with the army from Canada, which, it appears from the accounts transmitted by General St. Clair, has certainly in view an attack on Ticonderoga and the several dependent posts. In this view of things, it seems absolutely necessary for you to pursue the most speedy and effectual measures to obtain a respectable reinforcement of the neighbouring militia. No time is to be lost. Much may be at stake; and I am persuaded, if General Howe is going up the river, he will make a rapid and vigorous push to gain the Highland passes. The militia cannot object to turning out, as the time of their detention cannot be long. Mr. Howe's movements will be soon understood. You will not think of sending Glover's brigade to the White Plains in the present situation of affairs. I am, &c.

TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Camp, at Middlebrook, 2 July, 1777.

Sir,

I had last night the honor of your letter of the 27th of June. The proposition, which relates to the exchange

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of the gentlemen you mention, is entirely agreeable to me, as they are now entitled to a releasement, from the time of their captivity, and fall within the rule of exchange I have prescribed to myself, which is that of liberating those first, who were first taken. I am sorry it is not in my power to comply with your request for arms. Notwithstanding the many arrivals, there is scarcely a sufficiency to supply the demands for the Continental troops. What has become of them I am unable to conceive. Every State complains of a deficiency; and great part of their several quotas comes into the field very indifferently furnished, and yet the public magazines are nearly exhausted. The importations, from time to time, far exceed the number of Continental troops raised to make use of them. These have not and could not have been all put into their hands; and yet there are very few of them now to be found undisposed of. If they are not many of them in possession of the militia, it is impossible to imagine where they are, as a very inconsiderable part of them has fallen into the hands of the enemy. The fluctuating state of the army, and the irregular manner in which the militia usually left the camp, rendered it impracticable to withdraw the arms entrusted to them at their coming out; and gave them a fair opportunity of appropriating them to themselves, which, every reason obliges me to believe, they did not fail to improve. It appears to me highly probable, that, upon a careful scrutiny, many individuals will be found in possession of more than their own use requires, and the surplus will fully answer the purpose you have in view.

Since my last, the enemy, disappointed in their attempt upon our right, have made an experiment upon our left; and, frustrated in that also, have now abandoned the Jerseys, and encamped upon Staten Island.

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There is a great stir among their shipping; and, in all probability, their next movement will be by water; though it is impossible to decide, with certainty, to what place. But I last night received intelligence from General Schuyler, that General Burgoyne is beginning to operate against Ticonderoga and its dependencies. If it is not merely a diversion, but a serious attack, of which it bears strongly the appearance, it is a certain proof, that the next step of General Howe's army will be towards Peekskill, and very suddenly, if possible, to get possession of the passes in the Highlands, before this army can have time to form a junction with the troops already there. To guard against contingencies, I have ordered General Parsons's and General Varnum's brigades to march off with all despatch towards Peekskill, and, when they have arrived at or near that post, a reinforcement of four of the strongest Massachusetts regiments will proceed thence immediately to Albany, on their way to Ticonderoga. I have also urged General Clinton, without loss of time, to call out a respectable body of the New York militia, to join General Putnam. I have the fullest confidence, that you will do every thing you can, to second my endeavours, by forwarding, as fast as possible, the remaining troops of your State, or whatever else may be in your power. Our greatest exertions will be requisite, to counteract the enemy in their first attempts, on which their success chiefly depends. I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, &c.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Middlebrook, 2 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I am pleased to find, by your letter to Congress, that a strong supply of provisions has been thrown into Ticonderoga. Since that is the case, I see no reason for apprehending that it can possibly fall into the hands of the enemy in a short time, even were they to bring their whole force to a point; but if they have divided it to make the different attacks that you mention, General St. Clair will in all probability have an opportunity of acting upon the offensive, and should he not be quite successful, he may damage them so considerably, that they will not be able to attack him in his works; to which I dare say he will always secure a retreat in case of accident.

General Howe, as you have been informed, made a show of marching for the Delaware, but suddenly turned back to Brunswic, and from thence to Amboy. He came out again with his whole force a few days ago, with a seeming intention to make a general attack upon us, but after marching seven or eight miles, parallel with the Sound, he returned again into Amboy, contenting himself with burning many houses and plundering all that fell in his way. The day before yesterday he threw the whole of his army over to Staten Island, and totally evacuated the State of New Jersey. Before the accounts from the northward we were much at a loss to account for these strange manœuvres; but it now looks very like a plan to amuse us, till accounts could be received by them of the movements of Burgoyne. If a coöperation is intended, General Howe must speedily throw off the mask, and make his preparations for going up the North River; if he does not, I shall think that

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the fleet and a small force of Indians and light troops are amusing you upon the Lake, while the main body comes round and forms a junction by water. One reason operates strongly against this, in my opinion, and that is, a man of General Burgoyne's spirit and enterprise would never have returned from England, merely to execute a plan from which no great credit or honor was to be derived. I shall, therefore, till I see the contrary, believe, that he will make a strenuous effort to break through by the way of Ticonderoga. I shall hold this army in readiness to move, and have desired General Clinton to call in the militia of Orange and Ulster, and General Putnam that of Connecticut, which is most contiguous. If we can keep General Howe below the Highlands, I think their schemes will be entirely baffled.

I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, at Middlebrook, 2 July, 1777.

Sir,

The enclosed copies of General St. Clair's letters, transmitted yesterday afternoon and last night by General Schuyler, I have thought it my duty to send to you. The intelligence they contain is important and interesting; nor are there circumstances wanting besides these, to induce a belief, or at least to raise a strong presumption, that the enemy have in contemplation a junction of their two armies by way of the Lakes and the North River. If they have their whole Canada force on the former, it is certainly their object. On receiving these accounts, I wrote immediately to General Putnam to embark Nixon's brigade for reinforcing the northern army; to wait, however, the arrival or near approach of

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General Parsons's and General Varnum's brigades from this place, who march this morning, or the coming in of an equal number of militia to supply their place before they sail. This I have done by the advice of my general officers, and it is all that is thought practicable in the present uncertain, indeterminate situation of things. The rest of the army here will be held in readiness to move according to information and circumstances.

As I have observed, if we were certain General Burgoyne was approaching Ticonderoga with his whole army, I should not hesitate a moment in concluding, that it is in consequence of a preconcerted plan with General Howe, and that the latter is to coöperate with him, by pushing his whole force up the North River, and aiming a stroke in the first instance and immediately against the Highland passes. But as the appearance of the enemy on the Lake may be a feint, calculated to amuse and distract, though it may seem like a real attack, to draw this army to Peekskill and more to the northward, that General Howe may with more facility turn his arms against Philadelphia, it has been determined unadvisable for us to move, till we have further proofs of his intentions, and that our conduct must be governed by his.

Our situation is truly delicate and embarrassing. Should we march to Peekskill, leaving General Howe on Staten Island, there will be nothing to prevent his passing to South Amboy, and pushing from thence to Philadelphia, or in short by any other route; though the marching such of his troops from the point opposite Amboy, as were encamped there, and the sailing of the ships from Princess Bay yesterday morning, are circumstances indicating that an embarkation has or will take place. On the other hand, if the North River and the possession of the Highlands are his objects, our

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remaining here till his views are certainly known may subject us to a risk that we wish to avoid. Thus, let us examine matters as we will, difficulties stare us in the face. We shall attempt to consult, and to do the best we can. I have written to Generals Putnam and George Clinton fully upon the subject, urging them to put forth every exertion in their power, and instantly to call in a respectable body of militia to aid in the defence of those important posts at this critical conjuncture. I trust they will come out; their services in all probability will be wanted but for a very short time.

I have the honor to be, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL ARMSTRONG.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 4 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of receiving yours of the 20th of June some days ago, but the constant hurry I was in, during General Howe's late manœuvre in Jersey, must apologize for not answering you sooner. The spirit, with which the militia of this state and Pennsylvania turned out upon the late alarm, far exceeded my most sanguine expectations, and I am persuaded must have chagrined General Howe, who, I believe, rather expected support than opposition, from Pennsylvania in particular. The evacuation of Jersey at this time seems to be a peculiar mark of Providence, as the inhabitants have an opportunity of securing their harvests of hay and grain, the latter of which would in all probability have undergone the same fate with many farm-houses, had it been ripe enough to take fire. The distress of many of the inhabitants, who were plundered not only of their effects, but of their provision of every kind, was

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such, that I sent down several wagon-loads of meat and flour to supply their present wants.

I am yet perplexed to find out the real intentions of the enemy; but, upon a presumption that their views are up the North River, I have advanced General Sullivan's division as far as Pompton, and the main body of the army to this place. In this position I shall lie, till I receive more certain information of their designs. I have dismissed all the militia of this State, except about one hundred, who serve as a guard to the stores at Pompton and Succasony Plains; and it would be very agreeable to me, to have as few as possible of those of Pennsylvania kept in service, because their time, at this season of harvest, is truly valuable to them. As our boats are up the Delaware, a guard is absolutely necessary over them; I do not think it would be prudent to carry them down yet, for, as a great part of the campaign is to come, General Howe may see occasion to renew his operations against Philadelphia; indeed we do not know that he has laid them aside; and, if he goes round by sea, we must use the boats to cross the river in order to meet him.

I am pleased at the honorable mark of distinction, which the State of Pennsylvania has conferred upon you, by appointing you to the command of its State troops, and am convinced that by your acceptance of it you will be enabled to render the State and your country very essential service, should she herself be attacked, or her assistance demanded by any of her sister States. I am, with great regard, dear Sir, yours, &c.

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TO GOVERNOR COOKE.

Morristown, 7 July, 1777.

SIR,

I make no doubt, but before this you will have heard, that the enemy have evacuated Jersey. This information I should have done myself the pleasure of transmitting to you, by the first opportunity after the event, had not my attention been employed in making a new disposition of the army, and had I apprehended it materially interesting, that it should have come immediately from myself. When General Howe withdrew his forces from this State and went to Staten Island, from the intelligence received at that time from General St. Clair at Ticonderoga, that the Canada army were on the Lake, and approaching that post, and from every other circumstance, it appeared extremely probable, nay almost certain, to me and to all the general and other officers possessed of the facts, that General Howe's first and immediate movement would be up the North River, and that the two armies meant to coöperate and favor each other's attack. This, I say, was my opinion and that of my officers at that time, from a full consideration of the intelligence we then had. But, I confess, however satisfied I was then upon this subject, I am now in extreme doubt respecting his intended operations. Having heard nothing from Ticonderoga since the 26th ultimo, nor any further accounts of the enemy's approach, we are left to conjecture, whether their appearance on the Lake was with a view to a real and serious attack, or whether to amuse and draw our attention that way, while a stroke is meditating against some other place. This uncertainty is rendered considerably greater, by the concurrent accounts of deserters, who have escaped from New York and Staten

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Island in the course of a few days past. From their information and a variety of circumstances, — such as, that berths are fitting up for the light-horse on board the transports, provender taken in and providing for three or four weeks, the embarkation of the officers' baggage, with their names and corps endorsed thereon, and the ships' watering, — it would seem more probable, that General Howe has in contemplation some other object, than the North River.

Whether he has, or what it is, however, is unknown to us. I have thought it my duty, nevertheless, to give you this information; that, if he should once more turn his arms against the eastern States, you may not be taken by surprise, but that matters may be put in the best train to receive him, which circumstances will admit. On my part, no exertions in my power shall be wanting to counteract his plans, wheresoever they may be directed, and to render every service, compatible with our general line of defence and the interest of the States at large. I have the honor, &c.*

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Morristown, 10 July, 1777.

SIR,

I this morning received a letter of the 7th instant from General Schuyler, a copy of which, and of its enclosure, I herewith send you. The intelligence which they contain is truly interesting, supposing it just; but it differs so widely from what we had reason to expect from the accounts mentioned in General St. Clair's letters to General Schuyler, copies of which you would

* This letter was sent as a circular to the governors of all the eastern States.

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receive in his letter transmitted from hence last night by Major Hoops, that I would fain flatter myself it is not true. I am the more encouraged to hope this, as Captain Farnham's letter from Fort Anne to Brigadier Learned seems to be the foundation of the whole, and does not authorize the unfavorable and unhappy conclusions built upon it. I should rather suppose, if any accident has befallen us, it must have happened to the detachment of men from the Grants, under Colonel Warner; for we find from General St. Clair's letters, he expected something from him. The whole account is so confused, that we cannot establish any certain deduction from it; and I shall be happy if it proves premature and groundless.*

I am told by a gentleman, who came to camp yesterday evening, that Nixon's brigade would certainly arrive at Albany on Tuesday morning, as he saw the vessels, in which it was embarked, standing up the evening before with a fair wind. If the event mentioned by General Schuyler should not have happened, we cannot doubt but General Burgoyne has come up the Lake, determined, if possible, to carry his point, I mean, to possess himself of our posts in that quarter, and to push his arms further. Supposing this not to have happened, as our Continental levies are so deficient in their number, our security and safety will require that aids from the militia should be called forth in cases of emergency; if it has, there is now an absolute necessity for their turning out to check General Burgoyne's progress; or the most disagreeable consequences may be appre-

* The letter and enclosures contained intelligence of the evacuation of Ticonderoga, which proved in the main to be true. General Schuyler wrote from Stillwater, where the news met him on his way to Fort Edward, that, to oppose the whole of Burgoyne's army, he had only seven hundred Continental troops, and fourteen hundred militia.

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hended. Upon this occasion I would take the liberty to suggest to Congress the propriety of sending an active, spirited officer to conduct and lead them on. If General Arnold has settled his affairs, and can be spared from Philadelphia, I would recommend him for this business, and that he should immediately set out for the northern department; he is active, judicious, and brave, and an officer in whom the militia will repose great confidence. Besides this, he is well acquainted with that country, and with the routes and most important passes and defiles in it. I do not think he can render more signal services, or be more usefully employed at this time, than in this way. I am persuaded his presence and activity will animate the militia greatly, and spur them on to a becoming conduct. I could wish him to be engaged in a more agreeable service, to be with better troops, but circumstances call for his exertions in this way, and I have no doubt of his adding much to the honors he has already acquired.

In consequence of the advices from General St. Clair, and the strong probability there is that General Howe will push against the Highland passes to coöperate with General Burgoyne, I shall, by the advice of my officers, move the army from hence to-morrow morning towards the North River. If such should be his intention, we shall not be too early, as a favorable wind and tide will carry him up in a few hours. On the other hand, if Philadelphia is his object, he cannot get round before we can arrive there; nor can he well debark his troops, and proceed across the land, before we can oppose him. I have the honor to be, &c.

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Pompton Plains, 12 July, 1777.

SIR,

When I had the honor of addressing you last, I hoped the intelligence received respecting our affairs in the northern department was not true, or at least that they were not so unfavorable as they were then represented. But the enclosed copy of a letter from General Schuyler, which came to hand yesterday evening, confirms it, most unhappily for us, in its fullest latitude. This event, the evacuation of our posts on the Lake, among the most unfortunate that could have befallen us, is rendered more interesting by the manner in which it took place. I have no further information upon the subject, than what the copy contains, and shall be happy to hear by my next advices, that the main body of the army, of whose situation General Schuyler knew nothing with certainty, have not become prisoners; for I fear, from the disposition they discovered on this distressing occasion, they would have surrendered to the enemy, in case they fell in with them, though inferior in number.

In respect to General Schuyler's demands, it is not in my power to comply with the whole of them. Not a single tent can be furnished; the kettles will be, and are ordered on; and an express is going to Springfield for all the musket-cartridges, sixty barrels of powder, and a proportionable quantity of lead and cartridge-paper for his use. Ten pieces of artillery, with harness, are also ordered, with proper officers from Peekskill. I have written to him to procure horses and drivers himself, as they are to be obtained with much more ease where he is than here; nor can he be supplied with the heavy cannon, which he requests, supposing

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them necessary, not having one to spare from a more important use, the defence of the Highlands. Colonel Putnam, I imagine, will be with him before this, as his regiment is part of Nixon's brigade, who will answer every purpose he can possibly have for an engineer at this crisis. A supply of intrenching tools was sent to him four or five days ago, in consequence of an application then made.

I should be extremely happy if our situation would allow me to afford him a large reinforcement of men; but I cannot with any degree of propriety, in the opinion of my general officers, send more to his aid at this time than a number of recruits on their march from Massachusetts, belonging to some of the regiments under his command, who amount to six hundred at least, and are now, I suspect, pretty well advanced towards Peekskill. With this augmentation of what he already has, supposing General St. Clair and his force to have come in, and any number of militia to have turned out, he will have an army equal, if not superior, to General Burgoyne's, according to the only accounts we have obtained. Besides this consideration, it is most probable that General Burgoyne will suspend his operations till General Howe makes a movement and an effort on his part. His designs, I think, are most unquestionably against the Highlands, and that he will attempt the execution as soon as possible.

We have been prevented marching to-day by the rain; but, as soon as the weather permits, we shall proceed as expeditiously as we can towards the North River, and cross, or not, as shall appear necessary from circumstances. In my last I took the liberty of suggesting the propriety of sending an active officer to animate the militia that may assemble for checking General Burgoyne's progress, and mentioned General Arnold for

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that purpose. Being more and more convinced of the important advantages, that will result from his presence and conduct, I have thought it my duty to repeat my wishes on the subject, and that he may, without a moment's loss of time, set out from Philadelphia for that purpose. When this arrives, it is likely General Howe's intention will be well understood; but whether it is or not, as there are strong reasons to believe his operations will be up the North River and on the east side of it, I shall take the liberty to recommend the sending on the North Carolina and other Continental troops at Philadelphia, to join the army, unless Congress have some information that a southern expedition is intended, of which I am not apprized. Your letter of the 8th was duly received; and, agreeably to your request, I communicated to Generals Greene and Knox the resolution of Congress respecting them and General Sullivan, the last of whom I have not seen since it came to hand.* I have the honor to be, &c.

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* A report had reached the camp, that Congress had appointed Ducoudray a major-general in the American army, and that he was to take command of the artillery. Without waiting to have this rumor confirmed from any official source, Generals Greene, Sullivan, and Knox wrote each to Congress a laconic epistle, dated on the same day, and requested, that, should the fact be so, they might have permission to retire from the army. The following is a copy of General Greene's letter to the President of Congress.

"Camp, at Middlebrook, 1 July, 1777.

"SIR,

"A report is circulating here at camp, that Monsieur Ducoudray, a French gentleman, is appointed a major-general in the service of the United States, his rank to commence from the 1st of last August. If the report be true, it will lay me under the necessity of resigning my commission, as his appointment supersedes me in command. I beg you will acquaint me with respect to the truth of the report, and, if true, enclose me a permit to retire. I am, with great respect, your most obedient humble servant.

"N. GREENE."

The letters of General Sullivan and General Knox were of the same purport, and clothed in nearly the same language. After taking the

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Head-Quarters, Pompton Plains, 13 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote to you yesterday by express, informing you of what I had done towards furnishing you with such supplies as it is in my power to give, and the obstacles that at present lie in the way of granting you others that your situation demands. Since that I have received yours of the 9th.* I have sent by express to Peekskill, to order on from thence to you, as speedily

subject into consideration, the Congress resolved, "That the President transmit to General Washington copies of the several letters from Generals Sullivan, Greene, and Knox to Congress, dated July 1st, 1777, with directions to him to let these officers know, that Congress consider the said letters as an attempt to influence their decisions, an invasion of the liberties of the people, and as indicating a want of confidence in the justice of Congress; that it is expected by Congress, the said officers will make proper acknowledgments for an interference of so dangerous a tendency; but, if any of those officers are unwilling to serve their country under the authority of Congress, they shall be at liberty to resign their commissions and retire." — *Journals, July 7th.* The report was unfounded, Congress having made no such appointment; nor, when the letters were written, had the case of Ducoudray been brought in a formal manner before them. It was called up, however, about the same time, and after three or four days' debate, Congress determined not to ratify the treaty entered into between Mr. Deane and Monsieur Ducoudray.

The Commissioners in France had been instructed by Congress to procure a few good engineers for the American service. They engaged four officers of this description, who held commissions in the French army, namely Duportail, Laumoy, Radière, and Gouvion. — See *Diplomatic Correspondence*, Vol. I. p. 265. These officers came to the United States with the knowledge and approbation of the French government, and were the only ones engaged by the express authority of Congress. The contract made between them and the Commissioners, Franklin and Deane, was confirmed; and Duportail was appointed colonel of engineers, Laumoy and Radière lieutenant-colonels, and Gouvion major. They proved to be valuable officers, and their services in the engineer department were of essential importance during the war. — *Journals, July 8th, October 2d.*

* This letter was dated at Fort Edward, and contained the following particulars. "I have not been able to learn what is become of General St. Clair and the army. The enemy followed the troops, that came to

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as possible, forty barrels of powder and a proportional quantity of lead.

It is astonishing beyond expression, that you have heard nothing of St. Clair and the army under him. I am totally at a loss to conceive what has become of them. The whole affair is so mysterious, that it even baffles conjecture. I know not how to suppose it possible, that they can be on any route towards us, without our hearing something of them, and even if they have been all taken prisoners, one would imagine, that the account of it, by some channel or other, would have come to your knowledge. Sometimes I am led to doubt whether it may not be possible, that they had changed their design of retreating from the forts, and returned to them; but here again it occurs, that they could have found some means to communicate intelligence of it to you. I impatiently wait more certain accounts of their fate. Meantime, I hope you will leave nothing in your power undone to check the career of the enemy. This is the second day I have been detained here by the badness of the weather. As soon as it will permit, I shall prosecute my march through the Clove. I am, &c.

Skenesborough, as far as Fort Anne, where they were yesterday repulsed; notwithstanding which Colonel Long, contrary to my express orders, evacuated that post. I am here at the head of a handful of men, not above fifteen hundred, without provision, with little ammunition, not above five rounds to a man, having neither balls, nor lead to make any; the country in the deepest consternation; no carriages to remove the stores from Fort George, which I expect every moment to learn is attacked; and what adds to my distress is, that a report prevails, that I had given orders for the evacuation of Ticonderoga, whereas not the most distant hint of such an intention can be drawn from any of my letters to General St. Clair, or any other person whatever."

As soon as it was made known to General St. Clair, that the loss of Ticonderoga was ascribed to General Schuyler, as commander of the northern department, he wrote a letter, which he caused to be published, taking the whole responsibility of that event upon himself and the officers acting with him.

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TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Clove, 15 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I last night received your favor of the 10th instant. Joined to the unfortunate reverse, that has taken place in our affairs, I am happy to hear that General St. Clair and his army are not in the hands of the enemy. I really feared they had become prisoners. The evacuation of Ticonderoga and Mount Independence is an event of chagrin and surprise, not apprehended nor within the compass of my reasoning. I know not upon what principle it was founded, and I should suppose it still more difficult to be accounted for, if the garrison amounted to five thousand men, in high spirits, healthy, well supplied with provision and ammunition, and the eastern militia marching to their succour, as you mention in your letter of the 9th, to the Council of Safety of New York. This stroke is severe indeed, and has distressed us much. But notwithstanding things at present have a dark and gloomy aspect, I hope a spirited opposition will check the progress of General Burgoyne's army, and that the confidence derived from his success will hurry him into measures, that will in their consequences be favorable to us. We should never despair. Our situation has before been unpromising, and has changed for the better; so, I trust, it will again. If new difficulties arise, we must only put forth new exertions, and proportion our efforts to the exigency of the times. As the operations of this army are uncertain, depending much upon General Howe's, which still remain to be known, I think it will be expedient that you should send down to New Windsor and Fishkill all the vessels and craft you may not have occasion for at Albany, to be in readiness for transporting a part

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of our force up the river, in case the situation of affairs should require it, and circumstances will admit. I should suppose his movement will be up the river, to coöperate with Burgoyne, and with a view, if possible, of concentrating their forces. This idea prompted me to advise what I have respecting the vessels, and more particularly, as carrying our troops by water will not only facilitate their arrival, but fit them for more immediate service, than marching by land in cases of emergency.

I observe you mention the evacuation of Fort George, as a necessary act. For my own part, I cannot determine upon the propriety of such a measure, being totally unacquainted with its strength and situation, and of the grounds adjoining. But there are gentlemen here, who seem to consider it extremely defensible and of great importance. They say, that a spirited, brave, judicious officer with two or three hundred good men, together with the armed vessels you have built, would retard General Burgoyne's passage across the Lake for a considerable time, if not render it impracticable and oblige him to take a much more difficult and circuitous route. I only mean to submit it to your consideration, hoping that whatever is best will be pursued, in this and every other instance.* I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

* To this paragraph General Schuyler replied;—"The fort was part of an unfinished bastion of an intended fortification. The bastion was closed at the gorge. In it was a barrack capable of containing between thirty and fifty men; without ditch, without wall, without cistern; without any picket to prevent an enemy from running over the wall; so small as not to contain above one hundred and fifty men; commanded by ground greatly overlooking it, and within point-blank shot; and so situated that five hundred men may lie between the bastion and the Lake, without being seen from this *extremely defensible* fortress. Of the vessels built there, one was afloat and tolerably fitted, the other still upon the stocks; but, if the two had been upon the water, they would have been of little use without rigging or guns."—*MS. Letter, July* 18*th.*

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TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, at the Clove, 16 July, 1777.

SIR,

I beg leave to congratulate Congress on the captivity of Major-General Prescott and one of his aids. The particulars of this fortunate event you will find in the enclosed extract of a letter this minute received from General Spencer; which, I presume, are at large in the packet Mr. Greenleaf will deliver. Lieutenant-Colonel Barton, who conducted the enterprise, and the small handful under his command, have great merit. I shall immediately propose to General Howe his exchange for that of Major-General Lee, which, if acceded to, will not only do away one ground of controversy between General Howe and myself, but will release Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers, and procure the enlargement of an equal number of ours in his hands.*

In mine of this morning I desired that Colonel Procter's regiment should join this army without loss of

* Lieutenant-Colonel Barton, of the Rhode Island militia, had received intelligence, that General Prescott was at a house about five miles from Newport, and a mile from the west shore of the Island. With about forty volunteers, including Captains Adams and Phillips, he crossed the bay from Warwic Neck in the night, eluding the enemy's guard-boats, and reached the house unperceived. General Prescott was taken from his bed, and hurried off instantly to the boat, and also Major Barrington his aid-de-camp, and a sentinel who stood at the door. With such silence and celerity was the enterprise conducted, that the general's guard, stationed two hundred yards from the house in which he slept, was not alarmed. Colonel Barton and his party immediately recrossed the bay, and arrived safely in Warwic with their prize. This was one of the boldest, best executed, and most successful adventures of the revolution. Congress testified their "just sense of the gallant behaviour" of Colonel Barton, and the officers and men of his party, and voted that an elegant sword should be presented to him. He was likewise promoted to the rank and pay of a colonel in the service of the United States. — *Journals, July 25th, December 24th.*

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time. Upon consulting General Knox, we are of opinion they had better halt at Trenton with General Nash till further orders, as the operations of General Howe are not yet perfectly understood. I have nothing new from the northern department, and only add, that I have the honor to be, with great respect, Sir, your most obedient servant.

TO LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR WILLIAM HOWE.

New Jersey, 16 July, 1777.

SIR,

The fortune of war having thrown Major-General Prescott into our hands, I beg leave to propose his exchange for that of Major-General Lee. This proposition, being agreeable to the letter and spirit of the agreement subsisting between us, will, I hope, have your approbation. I am the more induced to expect it, as it will not only remove one ground of controversy between us, but in its consequences effect the exchange of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell and the Hessian field-officers, for a like number of ours of equal rank in your possession. I shall be obliged by your answer upon the subject, assuring you, that Major-General Prescott shall be sent in, if the proposed exchange is acceded to, either on the previous releasement of General Lee, or your promise that the same shall take place immediately on General Prescott's return.

I have the honor, &c.

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TO GOVERNOR TRUMBULL.

Head-Quarters, at the Clove, 17 July, 1777.

SIR,

I have the honor of yours of the 14th, with its enclosures. I had some time before received the account of the evacuation of Ticonderoga; but upon what grounds or for what reasons this sudden resolution was taken, I have not yet learnt. I have not heard from General Schuyler since the 10th. He was then at Fort Edward, and expected that General St. Clair, who was at Bedford with the troops that he brought off, would join him in a few days. I am in hopes, that General Burgoyne has not followed his success with much rapidity. I have sent up such a reinforcement of men and artillery as I could spare; and I am not without hopes, that when the army in that quarter collect again, and have taken breath, after their late confusion, they will be able, with the assistance of the militia, to check Burgoyne in a country, which I am informed is very strong by nature.

The capture of General Prescott was a bold enterprise, and will give us an opportunity of making a demand of the releasement of General Lee in such a manner, that I think General Howe cannot with honor refuse to comply. Until I know General Howe's determination upon this matter, I would not have General Prescott sent forward. I would have him genteelly accommodated, but strongly guarded. I would not admit him to parole, as General Howe has not thought proper to grant General Lee that indulgence. I have just received a letter from General Parsons, in which he informs me, that he understands General Prescott is to be sent to Windham, which he says is by no means a place of safety, as it would be easy for him to

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effect an escape to Long Island by means of the disaffected. I therefore beg he may be removed further from the Sound, and into some place where the people are generally well affected. A vigilant officer should be sent with him, whose constant care he should remain under; for, by shifting guards, it is more than probable, that some inattentive person might give him an opportunity of making his escape. I trust, if General Lee's exchange is acceded to, that a general exchange of prisoners may be brought about, as the former treatment of that gentleman was one principal bar to its being carried into execution before. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Head-Quarters, at the Clove, 18 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

As I have not had the pleasure of hearing from you since the 10th instant, I am induced to hope that the enemy have not pursued their success with the rapidity, that was to be apprehended, and that General St. Clair will have formed a junction with you before they advance upon you. Immediately upon the receipt of your first letter, concerning the distress you would labor under for want of the assistance of an active officer, well acquainted with the country, I wrote to Congress and desired them to send up General Arnold, provided the matter before them respecting his rank was settled in such a manner, that determined him to continue in service. Upon my requisition, General Arnold, waving for the present all dispute about rank, left Philadelphia and arrived here last evening, and this day proceeds on his journey to join you. Although he conceives himself, if his promotion had been regular, superior in

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command to General St. Clair, yet he generously upon this occasion lays aside his claim, and will create no dispute, should the good of the service require him to act in concert. I need not enlarge upon the well known activity, conduct, and bravery of General Arnold. The proofs he has given of all three have gained him the confidence of the public and of the army, the eastern troops in particular.

I will not condemn or even pass a censure upon any officer unheard; but I think it a duty, which General St. Clair owes to his own character, to insist upon an opportunity of giving the reasons for his sudden evacuation of a post, which, but a few days before, he by his own letters thought tenable at least for a while. People at a distance are apt to form wrong conjectures; and if General St. Clair has good reasons for the step he has taken, I think the sooner he justifies himself the better. I have mentioned these matters, because he may not know that his conduct is looked upon as very unaccountable, by all ranks of people in this part of the country. If he is reprehensible, the public have an undoubted right to call for that justice, which is due from an officer, who betrays or gives up his post in an unwarrantable manner.

When I had proceeded thus far, yours of the 14th came to hand enclosing a copy of the council of war, held at Ticonderoga before the evacuation. I shall, as you desire, transmit a copy of it to Congress. By that account the strength of the garrison falls very far short of the returns made to me a little time before, but much more so of your estimate, in which you say the garrison consisted of five thousand men. I can give no particular directions for your conduct, but I trust that every proper step will be taken to make a vigorous defence.

I am, &c.

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TO THE BRIGADIER-GENERALS OF MILITIA IN THE WESTERN PARTS OF MASSACHUSETTS AND CONNECTICUT.

Head-Quarters, at the Clove, 18 July, 1777.

GENTLEMEN,

The evacuation of Ticonderoga has opened a door for the enemy, unless speedily and vigorously opposed, to penetrate the northern parts of the State of New York, and the western parts of New Hampshire and Massachusetts Bay. It is also to be feared, that they will form a junction by the way of the North River with General Howe, and thereby cut off the communication between the eastern and southern States. I need not represent to you how fatal such a measure would prove to the interests and liberties of the United States. It cannot be supposed, that the small number of Continental troops assembled at Fort Edward is alone sufficient to check the progress of the enemy. To the militia, therefore, must we look for support in this time of trial; and I trust, that you will immediately upon receipt of this, if you have not done it already, march with at least one third part of the militia under your command, and rendezvous at Saratoga, unless directed to some other place by General Schuyler or General Arnold. I would recommend it to you to engage your men to remain in service for a limited time, to be regularly relieved by others at the expiration of that time. We shall then know what force we have to depend upon, and it will also be more convenient for the men, part of whom may be gathering their harvests while the others are bravely defending their country. General Arnold, who is so well known to you all, goes up at my request to take the command of the militia in particular, and I have no doubt but you

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will, under his conduct and direction, repel an enemy from your borders, who, not content with hiring mercenaries to lay waste your country, have now brought savages, with the avowed and express intent of adding murder to desolation. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL PUTNAM.

Eleven Miles in the Clove, 21 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

The intelligence, which occasioned us to advance from the entrance of the Clove yesterday morning, I find to have been premature, and mean to remain here till I have your answer. What I wish to be particularly and certainly informed of is, whether you have received any further accounts from General Sullivan, or other persons contiguous to the water, respecting the ships that were seen going up the Sound; whether they have come to anchor, and where; whether they have troops on board, or have landed any, and what number of ships in the whole has appeared. You will, I say, give me the most particular information you have obtained in these several instances immediately by express. I shall anxiously wait for your answer, and have no doubt of receiving it to night. Our situation here is distressing, and the conduct of General Howe extremely embarrassing. I am, &c.

TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

Camp, Eleven Miles in the Clove, 22 July, 1777.

SIR,

We have been under great embarrassments respecting the intended operations of General Howe, and still

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are, notwithstanding the utmost pains to obtain intelligence of the same. At present it would appear that he is going out to sea. By authentic information, there are only forty ships at New York; the rest are gone elsewhere, and have fallen down between the Narrows and the Hook. Between these two places, the number, from the most accurate observation, was about one hundred and twenty yesterday. As I observed before, their destination is uncertain and unknown; but I have thought it my duty to inform Congress of these facts, that they may give orders to the militia to hold themselves in readiness to march at the shortest notice, in case Philadelphia should be their object. At the same time I am to request, that they will have a sufficient number of proper look-outs fixed at the Capes of Delaware (to whose accounts implicit confidence may be given), to make the earliest reports of the arrival of any fleet, which Congress will transmit to me by the speediest conveyance.

As the enemy will probably make many feints, and have it unhappily but too much in their power from their shipping, I would advise that the look-outs should be cautioned to be extremely accurate in their observations and reports, mentioning, with as much precision as possible, the number of ships that may appear. Our situation is already critical, and may be rendered still more so by inaccurate and ill-grounded intelligence. From the advices, received on Saturday, of the movements of part of the enemy's ships, and the strong reasons there were to suppose General Howe would push up the North River to coöperate with General Burgoyne, I detached Lord Stirling with his division to Peekskill on Sunday morning. They crossed the river that evening and the next morning. This movement will prove unnecessary, should his destination be

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to the southward. I have also ordered General Glover's brigade from Peekskill to reinforce General Schuyler, from his representations of the inadequacy of his force to oppose General Burgoyne, and of the seeming backwardness of the people in that quarter to afford him aid. I have the honor to be, &c.*

TO MAJOR-GENERAL SCHUYLER.

Eleven Miles in the Clove, 22 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I am heartily glad you have found two such advantageous spots to take post at, and I hope the progress of the enemy will not be so rapid, as to prevent your throwing up such lines, as you may esteem necessary for their defence.† Though our affairs, for some days past, have worn a dark and gloomy aspect, I yet look forward to a fortunate and happy change. I trust General Burgoyne's army will meet sooner or later an effectual check, and, as I suggested before, that the success he has had will precipitate his ruin. From your accounts he appears to be pursuing that line of conduct, which of all others is most favorable to us; I mean acting in detachment. This conduct will certainly give room for enterprise on our part, and expose his parties to great hazard. Could we be so happy, as to cut one of them off, supposing it should not exceed four, five, or six hundred men, it would inspirit the

* There was a committee from Congress at this time in camp, instructed to make inquiry into the state of the army, particularly in regard to complaints in the commissary's department, and to report the results to Congress.

† Kosciuszko, the principal engineer in the northern department, had selected a position on Moses Creek, four miles below Fort Edward, to which the army removed on the 22d of July.

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people and do away much of their present anxiety. In such an event, they would lose sight of past misfortunes, and, urged at the same time by a regard for their own security, they would fly to arms and afford every aid in their power.

Your exertions to bring the people to view things in their proper light, to impress them with a just sense of the fatal consequences, that will result to themselves, their wives, their children, and their country from their taking a wrong part, and for preventing Toryism, cannot be too great. General Burgoyne, I have no doubt, will practise every art, which his invention shall point out, to turn their minds and seduce them from their allegiance. He should be counteracted as much as possible, as it is of the last importance to keep them firm and steady in their attachments. You have already given your attention to this matter, and I am persuaded you will omit nothing in your power to effect these great and essential points. Stopping the roads and ordering the cattle to be removed were certainly right and judicious. If they are well accomplished, the enemy must be greatly retarded and distressed.

There will be no occasion to transmit to Congress a copy of your observations, suggesting the necessity of evacuating Fort George. The gentlemen, who mentioned the holding of that post, had taken up an idea, that it was defensible with the assistance of the vessels on the Lake, which were supposed to be better equipped; and what gave countenance to the idea was, that the bastion was erected under the direction of British engineers, and was intended as part of a very large, strong, and extensive work. I thought it expedient to submit the matter to your further consideration, wishing you at the same time to pursue such measures respecting it, as your own judgment should advise and direct.

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I could heartily wish harmony and a good understanding to prevail through the whole army, and between the army and the people. The times are critical, big with important events; they demand our most vigorous efforts, and, unless a happy agreement subsists, these will be feeble and ineffectual. The enemies of America have cultivated nothing with so much industry, as to sow division and jealousy amongst us. I cannot give you any certain account of General Howe's intended operations. His conduct is puzzling and embarrassing beyond measure; so are the informations which I get. At one time the ships are standing up towards the North River; in a little while they are going up the Sound; and in an hour after they are going out of the Hook. I think in a day or two we must know something of his intentions. It will not be advisable to repose too much confidence in the works you are about to erect, and thence to collect a large quantity of stores. I begin to consider lines as a kind of trap, and as not answering the valuable purposes expected from them, unless they are on passes that cannot be avoided by an enemy. I am, &c.

TO MAJOR-GENERAL LINCOLN.

Ramapo, 24 July, 1777.

DEAR SIR,

I have just received information, that the fleet left the Hook yesterday, and, as I think the Delaware the most probable place of their destination, I shall immediately move the army that way. I desire that you will, agreeably to what I hinted to you, set off immediately, and proceed, as quick as your health will permit, to join the northern army under the command of

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General Schuyler. My principal view, in sending you there, is to take the command of the eastern militia, over whom I am informed you have influence, and who place confidence in you. You will concert such plans with General Schuyler, as shall seem to you most conducive to the public good. Yesterday I was in some doubt whether I should send you to the northward, but I have this day received two letters from General Schuyler in such a style, as convinces me, that it is absolutely necessary to send a determined officer to his assistance. I shall be glad to hear from you a state of northern affairs, as soon as you arrive there. I wish you health, and a safe journey, and am, with great regard, dear Sir, &c.

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APPENDIX.

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APPENDIX.

No. I. p. 14.

MEMORANDUM

OF WHAT PASSED AT THE INTERVIEW BETWEEN HIS EXCELLENCY GENERAL WASHINGTON AND COLONEL PATERSON, ADJUTANT-GENERAL OF THE ARMY UNDER GENERAL HOWE, 20 JULY, 1776.

AFTER the usual compliments, in which, as well as through the whole conversation, Colonel Paterson addressed General Washington by the title of Excellency, Colonel Paterson entered upon the business by saying; that General Howe much regretted the difficulties, which had arisen respecting the address of the letter to General Washington; that it was deemed consistent with propriety, and founded upon precedents of the like nature by ambassadors and plenipotentiaries, when disputes or difficulties of rank had arisen; that General Washington might recollect he had the last summer addressed a letter to General Howe, *To the Honorable William Howe, Esquire;* that Lord Howe and General Howe did not mean to derogate from the respect or rank of General Washington; that they held his person and character in the highest esteem; that the direction, with the addition of *&c. &c. &c.*, implied every thing that ought to follow. He then produced a letter, which he did not directly offer to General Washington, but observed that it was the same letter, which had been sent, and laid it on the table with a superscription *To George Washington, &c. &c. &c.* The General declined the letter, and said, that a letter directed to a person in a public character should have some description or indication of it, otherwise it would appear a mere private letter; that it was true the *&c. &c. &c.* implied every thing, and they also implied any thing; that the letter to General Howe, alluded to, was an answer to one received under a like address from him, which the officer on duty having taken he did not think proper to return, but answered

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it in the same mode of address; that he should absolutely decline any letter directed to him, as a private person, when it related to his public station. Colonel Paterson then said, that General Howe would not urge his delicacy farther, and repeated his assertions, that no failure of respect was intended.

He then said, that he would endeavour, as well as he could, to recollect General Howe's sentiments on the letter and resolves of Congress, sent to him a few days before, respecting the treatment of our prisoners in Canada; "that the affairs of Canada were in another department, not subject to the control of General Howe, but that he and Lord Howe utterly disapproved of every infringement of the rights of humanity." Colonel Paterson then took a paper out of his pocket, and after looking it over said he had expressed nearly the words. General Washington then said, that he had also forwarded a copy of the resolves to General Burgoyne. To which Colonel Paterson replied, that he did not doubt a proper attention would be paid to them, and that he (General Washington) was sensible that cruelty was not the characteristic of the British nation.

Colonel Paterson then proceeded to say, that he had it in charge to mention the case of General Prescott, who, they were informed, was treated with such rigor, that, under his age and infirmities, fatal consequences might be apprehended. General Washington replied, that General Prescott's treatment had not fallen under his notice; that all prisoners under his particular direction he had treated with kindness, and made their situation as easy and comfortable as possible; that he did not know where General Prescott was, but believed his treatment very different from their information. General Washington then mentioned the case of Colonel Allen, and the officers, who had been confined in Boston gaol. As to the first, Colonel Paterson answered, that General Howe had no knowledge of it, but by information from General Washington, and that the Canada department was not under his direction or control; that, as to the other prisoners at Boston, whenever the state of the army at Boston admitted it, they were treated with humanity and even indulgence; that he asserted this upon his honor, and should be happy in an opportunity to prove it.

General Washington then observed, that the conduct of several of the officers would well have warranted a different treatment from what they had received, some having refused to give any parole, and others having broken it when given by escaping or endeavouring so to do. Colonel Paterson answered, that, as to the first, they

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misunderstood the matter very much, and seemed to have mistaken the line of propriety exceedingly; and, as to the latter, General Howe utterly disapproved and condemned their conduct; that, if a remonstrance was made, such violations of good faith would be severely punished, but that he hoped General Washington was too just to draw public inferences from the misbehaviour of some private individuals; that bad men were to be found in every class of society; that such behaviour was considered as a dishonor to the British army.

Colonel Paterson then proceeded to say, that the goodness and benevolence of the King had induced him to appoint Lord Howe and General Howe his commissioners to accommodate this unhappy dispute; that they had great powers, and would derive the greatest pleasure from effecting an accommodation; and that he (Colonel Paterson) wished to have this visit considered as making the first advances to this desirable object. General Washington replied, that he was not vested with any powers on this subject by those from whom he derived his authority and power; but, from what had appeared or transpired on this head, Lord Howe and General Howe were only to grant pardons; that those, who had committed no fault, wanted no pardons; that we were only defending what we deemed our indisputable rights. Colonel Paterson said, that would open a very wide field for argument. He then expressed his apprehensions, that an adherence to forms was likely to obstruct business of the greatest moment and concern. He then observed, that a proposal had been formerly made of exchanging Governor Skene for Mr. Lovell; that he now had authority to accede to that proposal. General Washington replied, that the proposition had been made by the direction of Congress, and having been then rejected, he could not now renew the business, or give any answer, till he had previously communicated it to them.

Colonel Paterson behaved with the greatest politeness and attention during the whole business, and expressed strong acknowledgments, that the usual ceremony of blinding his eyes had been dispensed with. At the breaking up of the conference, General Washington strongly invited him to partake of a small collation provided for him, which he politely declined, alleging his late breakfast, and an impatience to return to General Howe, though he had not executed his commission so amply as he wished. Finding he did not propose staying, he was introduced to the general officers, after which he took his leave, and was safely conducted to his own boat, which waited for him about four miles distant from the city.

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No. II. p. 24.

GENERAL HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Head-Quarters, Staten Island, 1 August, 1776.

SIR,

I have received the favor of your letter of the 30th of July, and shall accordingly direct that Mr. Lovell, who is now at Halifax, be brought to this post, of which I shall have the honor of advising you, that the proposed exchange between him and Governor Skene may take place. The extent of my command having no relation to Canada, it is not in my power to give you the satisfaction I could wish, respecting the enlargement of Colonel Allen. It must therefore depend upon General Carleton's determination. But wishing sincerely to give relief to the distresses of all prisoners, I shall readily consent to the mode of exchange, which you are pleased to propose, namely, "officers for officers of equal rank, soldier for soldier, citizen for citizen," the choice to be made by the respective commanders for their own officers and men. You must be sensible, that deserters cannot be included in this arrangement; and for the mode of exchange in the naval line I beg leave to refer you to the admiral.

I cannot close this letter without expressing the deepest concern, that the unhappy state of the Colonies, so different from what I had the honor of experiencing during the last war, deprives me of the pleasure I should otherwise have had in a more personal communication. I am, with due respect, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. HOWE.

No. III. p. 51.

LORD HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON

Eagle, off Staten Island, 19 August, 1776.

SIR,

Concurring in the proposition you have been pleased to make, in your favor of the 17th, for an exchange of prisoners in my department, namely, "officers for those of equal rank, and sailors for sailors," I will take the liberty to propose an officer of the same rank to be exchanged for Mr. Josiah, when he arrives. The Cerberus

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being absent, I have no other information respecting the situation of Mr. Josiah, than what is communicated in your letter. But the matter, you may be assured, shall be inquired into, and every attention paid to the rules of propriety, as well as the dictates of humanity, on all such occasions.

Principles and conduct form the true distinctions of rank amongst men; yet, without competent habit in the manners of the world, they are liable to meet with unmerited disregard. But insult and indignities to persons of whatever rank, who are become parties in these unhappy disputes, cannot be justified, and are, I persuade myself, as much disapproved of by every officer under my command, as they can never cease to be by me. I am, with great personal respect, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

HOWE.

No. IV. p. 68.

BATTLE OF LONG ISLAND.

The unfortunate issue of the battle of Long Island was doubtless to be ascribed in part to the illness of General Greene. He had superintended the erection of the military works, and become thoroughly acquainted with the grounds. In the hope of his recovery, Washington deferred sending over a successor, till the urgency of affairs made it absolutely necessary; and then General Putnam took the command, without any previous knowledge of the posts which had been fortified beyond the lines, or of the places by which the enemy would make their approach; nor had he time to acquire this knowledge before the action. The consequence was, that, although he was the commander on the day of the battle, he never went beyond the lines at Brooklyn, and could give no other orders, than for sending out troops to meet the enemy at different points. The following is a letter to Congress, describing the events of the day, by Colonel Harrison, secretary to the Commander-in-chief.

"New York, eight o'clock, P. M., 27 August, 1776.

"SIR,

"I this minute returned from our lines on Long Island, where I left his Excellency the General. From him I have it in command

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to inform Congress, that yesterday he went there, and continued till evening, when, from the enemy's having landed a considerable part of their forces, and from many of their movements, there was reason to apprehend they would make in a little time a general attack. As they would have a wood to pass through before they could approach the lines, it was thought expedient to place a number of men there on the different roads leading from where they were stationed, in order to harass and annoy them in their march. This being done, early this morning a smart engagement ensued between the enemy and our detachments, which, being unequal to the force they had to contend with, have sustained a considerable loss; at least many of our men are missing. Among those that have not returned, are General Sullivan and Lord Stirling. The enemy's loss is not known certainly; but we are told by such of our troops as were in the engagement, and have come in, that they had many killed and wounded. Our party brought off a lieutenant, sergeant, and corporal, with twenty privates, prisoners.

"While these detachments were engaged, a column of the enemy descended from the woods, and marched towards the centre of our lines with a design to make an impression, but were repulsed. This evening they appeared very numerous about the skirts of the woods, where they have pitched several tents; and his Excellency inclines to think they mean to attack and force us from our lines by way of regular approaches, rather than in any other manner. To-day five ships of the line came up towards the town, where they seemed desirous of getting, as they turned a long time against an unfavorable wind; and, on my return this evening, I found a deserter from the twenty-third regiment, who informed me that they design, as soon as the wind will permit them to come up, to give us a severe cannonade, and to silence our batteries if possible. I have the honor to be, in great haste, Sir, your most obedient.

"ROBERT H. HARRISON."

As the two generals, who commanded in the engagement, were taken prisoners, no detailed official account of the action was ever reported to the Commander-in-chief. The following letter from Lord Stirling, and extracts from two others written by Colonel Haslet and General Sullivan, contain a few particulars not hitherto published. Lord Stirling was a prisoner on board Lord Howe's ship when he wrote.

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LORD STIRLING TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"Eagle, 29 August, 1776.

"MY DEAR GENERAL,

"I have now an opportunity of informing you of what has happened to me since I had last the pleasure of seeing you. About three o'clock in the morning of the 27th, I was called up and informed by General Putnam, that the enemy were advancing by the road from Flatbush to the Red Lion, and he ordered me to march with the two regiments nearest at hand to meet them. These happened to be Haslet's and Smallwood's, with which I accordingly marched, and was on the road to the Narrows, just as the daylight began to appear. We proceeded to within about half a mile of the Red Lion, and there met Colonel Atlee with his regiment, who informed me, that the enemy were in sight; indeed I then saw their front between us and the Red Lion. I desired Colonel Atlee to place his regiment on the left of the road, and to wait their coming up, while I went to form the two regiments I had brought with me along a ridge from the road up to a piece of wood on the top of the hill. This was done instantly on very advantageous ground.

"Our opponents advanced, and were fired upon in the road by Atlee's regiment, who, after two or three rounds, retreated to the wood on my left, and there formed. By this time Kichline's riflemen arrived; part of them I placed along a hedge under the front of the hill, and the rest in the front of the wood. The troops opposed to me were two brigades of four regiments each, under the command of General Grant; who advanced their light troops to within one hundred and fifty yards of our right front, and took possession of an orchard there, and some hedges, which extended towards our left. This brought on an exchange of fire between those troops and our riflemen, which continued for about two hours, and then ceased by those light troops retiring to their main body. In the mean time Captain Carpenter brought up two field-pieces, which were placed on the side of the hill, so as to command the road and the only approach for some hundred yards. On the part of General Grant there were two field-pieces. One howitzer advanced to within three hundred yards of the front of our right, and a like detachment of artillery to the front of our left. On a rising ground, at about six hundred yards' distance, one of their brigades formed in two lines opposite to our right, and the other extended in one line to the top of the hills, in the front of our left.

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"In this position we stood cannonading each other till near eleven o'clock, when I found that General Howe with the main body of the army was between me and our lines, and I saw that the only chance of escaping being all made prisoners, was to pass the creek near the Yellow Mills; and, in order to render this the more practicable, I found it absolutely necessary to attack a body of troops, commanded by Lord Cornwallis, posted at the house near the Upper Mills. This I instantly did, with about half of Smallwood's regiment, first ordering all the other troops to make the best of their way through the creek. We continued the attack a considerable time, the men having been rallied, and the attack renewed, five or six several times, and we were on the point of driving Lord Cornwallis from his station; but large reinforcements arriving rendered it impossible to do more than to provide for safety. I endeavoured to get in between that house and Fort Box, but, on attempting it, I found a considerable body of troops in my front, and several in pursuit of me on the right and left, and a constant firing on me. I immediately turned the point of a hill, which covered me from their fire, and I was soon out of the reach of my pursuers. I soon found that it would be in vain to attempt to make my escape, and therefore went to surrender myself to General de Heister, Commander-in-chief of the Hessians."

COLONEL HASLET TO THOMAS RODNEY.

"Camp, at Mount Washington, 4 October, 1776.

"On Sunday the 25th of August last my regiment was ordered to Long Island, in Lord Stirling's brigade, composed mostly of the southern troops, by whom we were much caressed, and highly complimented on our appearance, and dexterity in the military exercise and manœuvres. On Tuesday the 27th his brigade, consisting of five regiments, and a few of Sullivan's, not exceeding five thousand men, were ordered to advance beyond the lines and repulse the enemy. To oppose this small band were seventeen thousand regulars, much better furnished with field-pieces, and every other military appointment than we. Several of the regiments were broken and dispersed soon after the first onset. The Delawares and Marylanders stood firm to the last; and, after a variety of skirmishing, the Delawares drew up, on the side of a hill, and stood upwards of four hours, with a firm, determined countenance, in close array, their colors flying, the enemy's artillery playing on them all the while,

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not daring to advance and attack them, though six times their number, and nearly surrounding them. Nor did they think of quitting their station, till an express order from the general commanded their retreat, through a marsh and over a creek, the only opening left, which they effected in good order, with the loss of one man drowned in passing. The Delawares alone had the honor of bringing off twenty-three prisoners.

"I must also do Colonel Smallwood's battalion the justice to say, that the spirited attack made by them on the enemy, at the time the Delawares and themselves were retreating, greatly facilitated the escape of both. Twenty-seven of the Delawares next morning were missing. In that number were Lieutenants Stewart and Harney; the latter a prisoner; the other not yet heard of. Major McDonough was wounded in the knee; a ball passed through the sleeve of his coat without wounding the arm or his body. Lieutenant Anderson had a ball lodged in his throat; Lieutenant Corn a ball still in his back; they are recovered. The standard was torn with grape-shot in Ensign Stephen's hand, who is now in his element, and a most excellent officer. Such is our fate; the Delaware battalion, officers and men, are respected throughout this army. We are now in General Mifflin's brigade, who a few days since was appointed quartermaster-general; and by special order we encamp on the lines, near the General's house. In the retreat from Long Island, which was conducted with great prudence, Colonels Shee, Smallwood, Hand, and some others I do not recollect, were called into council, and requested to take the defence of the lines upon us, while the main body of the army crossed the East River to New York, which was accepted; and last of all crossed ourselves, thank God, in safety."

GENERAL SULLIVAN TO THE PRESIDENT OF CONGRESS.

"Whitemarsh, 25 October, 1777.

"I know it has been generally reported, that I commanded on Long Island when the action happened there. This is by no means true. General Putnam had taken the command from me four days before the action. Lord Stirling commanded the main body without the lines. I was to have commanded under General Putnam within the lines. I was uneasy about a road, through which I had often foretold, that the enemy would come, but could not persuade others to be of my opinion. I went to the hill near Flatbush to reconnoitre, and with a picket of four hundred men was surrounded by the enemy, who had advanced by the very road I had foretold,

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and which I had paid horsemen fifty dollars for patrolling by night, while I had the command, as I had no foot for the purpose.

"What resistance I made with these four hundred men against the British army, I leave to the officers who were with me to declare. Let it suffice for me to say, that the opposition of the small party lasted from half past nine to twelve o'clock.

"The reason of so few troops being on Long Island was because it was generally supposed, that the enemy's landing there was a feint to draw our troops thither, that they might the more easily possess themselves of New York. I often urged, both by word and writing, that, as the enemy had doubtless both those objects in view, they would first try for Long Island, which commanded the other; and then New York, which was completely commanded by it, would fall of course. But in this I was unhappy enough to differ from almost every officer in the army, till the event proved my conjectures were just."

From these several accounts it would appear, that no individual officer had the command in the engagement. Lord Stirling commanded the detachment on the right, which was opposed by the British General Grant. The regiment under Colonel Hand, stationed on the heights near Flatbush, was commanded by General Sullivan, rather by accident than in consequence of any direct order. Williams's and Miles's regiments at the left, posted on the road leading from Flatbush to Bedford, had no other commander than their respective colonels.

The number of American troops, who took part in the action, is estimated by Colonel Haslet at five thousand. This estimate is probably very near the truth. When the detachments retreated from Long Island, there were nine thousand in the whole. Thirteen hundred of these had gone over to Brooklyn after the engagement; consequently before their arrival the number on the Island was seven thousand seven hundred. Add to these about eleven hundred prisoners and killed, and it makes the amount eight thousand eight hundred on the day of the action. Of this number it is not probable, that General Putnam would weaken his camp by sending out more than five thousand, retaining only three thousand eight hundred for the defence of his lines. It appears, moreover, that the whole force beyond the lines, except three regiments, was on the right under Lord Stirling; whence it is evident, that the main attack was expected in that quarter, where in reality the enemy designed no more than a feint.

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General Howe, in his official despatch, reported that "many were suffocated and drowned in the marsh," and this has been repeated by historians. Colonel Haslet, who crossed the marsh, speaks of one man only as having been drowned. Another officer, who gave a very consistent account of this part of the action, which was published at the time, said; "We forced the advanced party, which first attacked us, to give way, through which opening we got a passage down to the side of a marsh, seldom before waded over, which we passed, and then swam a narrow river, all the time exposed to the fire of the enemy." Here is nothing said about any man being lost in the marsh; and it is at least problematical, whether any person, except the man mentioned by Colonel Haslet, was either drowned or suffocated.

No. V. p. 108.

AMERICAN LOYALISTS IN THE BRITISH SERVICE.

Before the arrival of General Howe at Staten Island, Governor Tryon had been active, through the agency of his emissaries, in affording encouragement to the loyalists, and preserving their attachment to the old order of things. In these efforts he had not been unsuccessful. When General Howe came to the Hook, he found Governor Tryon there on ship-board, with several persons of distinction in the province, "fast friends to government," who united in representing most favorably the temper and wishes of the people, and their readiness to take up arms for the King, the moment they should receive the countenance of a formidable military support from England. So high were General Howe's hopes raised by these flattering representations, that in his first letter to the minister from Staten Island, after informing him that he had "landed to the great joy of a most loyal people," he wrote;—

"I have the satisfaction to inform your Lordship, that there is great reason to expect a numerous body of the inhabitants to join the army from the provinces of York, the Jerseys, and Connecticut, who, in this time of universal oppression, only wait for opportunities to give proofs of their loyalty and zeal for government. Sixty men came over two days ago, with a few arms, from the neighbourhood of Shrewsbury, in Jersey, who are all desirous to serve; and I understand there are five hundred more in that quarter ready to follow

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their example. This disposition among the people makes me impatient for the arrival of Lord Howe, concluding the powers with which he is furnished will have the best effect at this critical time; but I am still of opinion, that peace will not be restored in America until the rebel army is defeated." — *Letter, July 7th.*

Lord George Germain replied; — "His Majesty expressed great satisfaction at the account which you give of the coming in of so many of his subjects. Such a step, whilst it proves that they are impressed with a grateful sense of their situation, in obeying the mildest and best of kings, will, it is to be hoped, when they find themselves sure of receiving protection, induce others to give similar proofs of their loyalty and zeal for government."— *Letter, August 22d.*

The first measure adopted by General Howe, for promoting this branch of the service, was to appoint officers for levying and commanding the provincial troops. Oliver Delancey, of New York, was commissioned as a brigadier-general; and the following copy of the enlisting orders issued by him, which is transcribed from an original paper found in the possession of a suspected person and sent to General Washington, will show in what manner the levies were to be raised.

"Jamaica, Queen's County, 5 September, 1776.

"His Excellency, William Howe, General and Commander-in-chief of all his Majesty's forces within the Colonies lying on the Atlantic Ocean, from Nova Scotia to West Florida inclusive, having authorized me to raise a brigade of Provincials solely for the defence of this Island, to reëstablish order and government within the same, to apprehend and drive all concealed rebels from among his Majesty's well affected subjects, and other essential purposes; I do hereby, for the encouragement of enlisting men in the county of Suffolk, give notice, that upon any good recommended characters raising a company of seventy men, they shall have commissions for one captain, one lieutenant, and one ensign; and soldiers are in the British pay; and it is hoped that the inhabitants of the country will cheerfully raise the men wanted for this service, as it will prevent the disagreeable business of detaching them, which I shall be under the necessity of doing, if the companies cannot be raised without it.

"Given under my hand and date as above.

"OLIVER DELANCEY, *Brigadier-General.*"

The celebrated Major Rogers, noted for his exploits on the frontiers in the preceding war, had now joined the British, and been

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promoted to the rank of a colonel, with the command of a regiment of loyalists called the *Queen's Rangers*. We have seen above, (Vol. III. p. 208,) that he was wandering about the country, under suspicious circumstances, while Washington's army was at Cambridge. General Howe wrote, on the 6th of August, "Major Rogers, having escaped to us from Philadelphia, is empowered to raise a battalion of rangers, which, I hope, may be useful in the course of the campaign." The following is a copy of enlisting orders sent out by him.

"Valentine's Hill, 30 December, 1776.

"Whereas his Majesty's service makes it absolutely necessary that recruits should be raised, this is to certify that Mr. Daniel Strang, or any other gentleman, who may bring in recruits, shall have commissions according to the number he or they shall bring in for the Queen's American Rangers. No more than forty shillings' bounty is to be given to any man, which is to be applied towards purchasing necessaries; to serve during the present rebellion and no longer. They will have their proportion of all rebel lands, and all privileges equal to any of his Majesty's troops. The officers are to be the best judges in what manner they will get their men in; either by parties, detachments, or otherwise, as may seem most advantageous; which men are to be attested before the first magistrate within the British lines.

"ROBERT ROGERS, *Lieutenant-Colonel Commandant of the Queen's Rangers.*"

Strang, who had the above paper in his possession, was taken up near the American camp at Peekskill. He was tried by a court-martial, and, making no defence, was condemned to suffer death, on the charge of holding correspondence with the enemy, and lurking around the camp as a spy. General Washington approved the sentence. But notwithstanding this rigor, and the danger of the service beyond the enemy's lines, yet persons were found to engage in it, who met with some success, though much less than had been anticipated by General Howe. Recruits for the British provincial regiments were raised, even as high up the North River as Duchess County and Livingston's Manor. The Island of New York, Long Island, Staten Island, and a large part of Westchester County, were wholly subject to the power of the enemy; and, as these were populous districts, they doubtless afforded the chief portion of the provincial troops enlisted into the King's service, while General Howe's head-quarters were in New York.

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General Howe himself gave a particular account of his attempt to raise provincial forces, and of its results, during the whole of his command in America. The notorious Galloway attacked him with severity in a pamphlet, and, among other censures, charged him with neglecting to employ the loyalists, who were ready to flock in throngs to his standard, if they had been properly encouraged. General Howe replied to Galloway's charges in what he called "*Observations on a Pamphlet*," appended to his NARRATIVE. Speaking on the present topic he says;

"Various offers of raising men were made to me, nor did I decline any of those offers that brought with them the least prospect of success; but I must add, that very few of them were fulfilled in the extent proposed.

"Mr. Oliver Delancey, who was reputed to be the most likely man in New York to induce the loyalists of that province to join the King's troops, was appointed a brigadier-general, and authorized to raise three battalions, to consist of 1,500 privates, placing at the head of each the most respectable characters, recommended as such by himself and by Governor Tryon. Every possible effort was used by those gentlemen, not only in the districts possessed by the King's troops, but by employing persons to go through the country, and invite the well-affected to come in. Several of the officers (as I have since been informed), anxious to complete their corps, sought for recruits, even amongst the prisoners, who were then very numerous, and ventured to hold out to them the temptations of pay, liberty, and pardon. Notwithstanding all these efforts and encouragements; notwithstanding the *loyalty* of the people, and the *many thousands flying over to the British troops for protection* (as asserted by the author), Brigadier-General Delancey, at the opening of the campaign in 1777, instead of 1,500, had only raised 597.

"Mr. Cortland Skinner, who was acknowledged to possess considerable influence in the Jerseys, where he had served the office of attorney-general with great integrity and reputation, was also appointed a brigadier-general, and authorized to raise five battalions, to consist of 2,500 privates, under the command of gentlemen of the country, nominated by himself. The same efforts were made as for the raising of Delancey's corps; but, at the opening of the campaign in 1777, Brigadier-General Skinner's numbers amounted only to 517, towards his expected five battalions of 2,500.

"In November, 1777, Brigadier-General Delancey's corps increased to 693, and Brigadier-General Skinner's to 859. In May,

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1778, their progress was so slow, that the first had only advanced to 707, the latter to 1,101.

"Several other corps were offered to be raised, and were accepted, in the winter of 1776, making in the whole thirteen, to consist of 6,500 men, including the brigades of Delancey and Skinner. But in May, 1778, the whole number in all these thirteen corps amounted only to 3,609, little more than half the promised complement, and of these, as I have before observed, only a small proportion were Americans.

"Upon our taking possession of Philadelphia, the same and indeed greater encouragements were held out to the people of Pennsylvania. Mr. William Allen, a gentleman who was supposed to have great family influence in that province; Mr. Chalmers, much respected in the three lower counties on the Delaware and in Maryland; and Mr. Clifton, the chief of the Roman Catholic persuasion, of whom there were said to be many in Philadelphia, as well as in the rebel army, serving against their inclinations; — these gentlemen were appointed commandants of corps, to receive and form for service all the well-affected that could be obtained. And what was the success of these efforts? In May, 1778, when I left America, Colonel Allen had raised only 152 rank and file; Colonel Chalmers 336; and Colonel Clifton 180; which, together with three troops of light dragoons, consisting of 132 troopers, and 174 *real volunteers* from Jersey, under Colonel Vandyke, amounting in the whole to 974 men, constituted all the force that could be collected in Pennsylvania, after the most indefatigable exertions, during eight months." — *Howe's Narrative*, pp. 51 – 53.

The ministry were of course sadly disappointed at this ill success. They had at one time sent out equipage for eight thousand provincials. The endeavour to enlist prisoners, which is here acknowledged by Sir William Howe, although with an intimation that it was unknown to him, was a subject of heavy complaint on the part of General Washington, who totally disapproved the practice, and used all his influence and authority to prevent its being either sanctioned by Congress, or adopted by any of the recruiting officers in the American army. Overtures were made to American officers, who were prisoners in New York, to join the British arms, with proffers of rank and liberal rewards. — See SPARKS's *Library of American Biography*, Vol. I. p. 319.

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No. VI. p. 157.

OPERATIONS OF THE ARMY.

While the army was moving from Haerlem Heights to White Plains, and for several days afterwards, General Washington was almost the whole time on horseback, reconnoitring the grounds, fixing on a place for a camp, and superintending the works thrown up for its defence. In the mean time the following communication was sent to the President of Congress by Colonel Harrison, the General's secretary.

"Head-Quarters, White Plains, 25 October, 1776.

"SIR,

"The whole of our army is now here, and on the neighbouring heights, except the troops left at Mount Washington and Kingsbridge (about fourteen hundred at the former, and six hundred at the latter), and General Lee's division, which now forms the rear, and which is on its march. Our removal, and that of the stores, have been attended with a great deal of trouble, owing to the scarcity and difficulty of procuring wagons. However, they are nearly effected, and without any loss. The general officers are now reconnoitring the several passes leading from the enemy, that the most important may be immediately secured. The situation of their army remains nearly the same, as when I had the honor of addressing you on the 21st instant. It differs in nothing unless it is, that their main body is more collected about New Rochelle. A few of their troops are extended as far as Mamaronec.

"On Monday night a detachment of our men, under the command of Colonel Haslet, was sent out to surprise and cut off Major Rogers, if possible, with his regiment, which was posted there. By some accident or other the expedition did not succeed so well as I could have wished. However, our advanced party, led on by Major Green, of the first Virginia regiment, fell in with their out-guard, and brought off thirty-six prisoners, sixty muskets, and some blankets. The number killed is not certainly known; but it is reported by an officer who was there, that he counted about twenty-five. Our loss was two killed, and ten or twelve wounded; among the latter, Major Green, whose recovery is very doubtful. On Wednesday there was also a smart skirmish between a party of Colonel Hand's riflemen, about two hundred and forty, and nearly the same number of Hessian *chasseurs*, in which the latter were put to rout. Our

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men buried ten of them on the field, and took two prisoners, one badly wounded. We sustained no other loss, than having one lad wounded, supposed mortally.

"The ships of war, that are in the North River, fell down yesterday morning or the evening before to Dobbs's Ferry, to prevent our bringing stores from below by water, and the removal of those that are landed there. As soon as the wagons, employed in bringing the baggage and stores of General Lee's division, are disengaged, they will be immediately sent to assist those already there to remove them. On Saturday night we had the misfortune to lose one of the new ships, intended to be sunk for obstructing the channel. She parted her cables in a severe squall, when properly ballasted, and bilged as soon as she struck the shore. The other ship was sunk well; and yesterday morning two brigs, both ready, were sent down for the same purpose.

"About two o'clock this afternoon, intelligence was brought to head-quarters, that three or four detachments of the enemy were on their march, and had advanced within about four miles of this place. It has been fully confirmed since by a variety of persons, who have been out to reconnoitre. Their number cannot be ascertained; but it is generally conjectured, that the detachments are or will be succeeded by as many columns composing their main body. Our drums have beat to arms, and the men are ordered to their several posts. Most probably some important event is upon the eve of taking place. I hope it will be victory in favor of our arms. General Lee, with his division, has not got up; but I hear he is on his march.

"Experiment having proved it difficult, if not impossible, to prevent the enemy from possessing the navigation of the North River, and rendering the communication and intercourse between the States divided by it extremely hazardous and precarious by means of their ships of war, it has become a matter of important consideration how to remedy the evil, and to guard against the consequences, which may result from it. I am charged by his Excellency to mention it to Congress, as a matter that has employed much of his thoughts, and that seems worthy of their most serious attention. He has communicated it to several of the general and other officers, and to many gentlemen of sense and discernment, who all agree with him, not only upon the propriety, but the absolute necessity, that two distinct armies should be formed, one to act particularly in the States which lie on the east, the other in those that are on the south of the river; the whole, however, to be raised on a general

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plan, and not to be confined to any particular place by the terms of enlistment. These matters, and the apparent difficulty and perhaps impracticability of succours being thrown across the river while the enemy can command it, have induced his Excellency to submit the measure to their consideration, not knowing how their operations may be directed, and foreseeing that innumerable evils may arise if a respectable force is not appointed to oppose their arms wheresoever they are carried. I am, &c.

"ROBERT H. HARRISON."

The following is an extract from a letter, written by Colonel Haslet to General Cæsar Rodney, dated October 28th, in which he recounts the particulars of the affair at Mamaronec.

"On Monday night, Lord Stirling ordered me out with seven hundred and fifty men to attack the enemy's out-posts ten miles from this place, at the village of Mamaronec; which was done, and their guards forced. We brought in thirty-six prisoners, a pair of colors, sixty stand of arms, and a variety of plunder besides. The party we fell in with was Colonel Rogers's, the late worthless Major. On the first fire he skulked off in the dark. His lieutenant, and a number of others, were left dead on the spot. Had not our guards deserted us on the first outset, he and his whole party must have been taken. On our side, three or four were left dead, and about fifteen wounded. Among the latter is Major Green, of the second Virginia regiment, wounded in the shoulder; and Captain Pope, who acted as major, and behaved with great bravery, wounded in his leg; both likely to recover. As this was the first effort of the kind, and a plan of his Lordship's, he was so highly pleased with our success, that he thanked us publicly on the parade."

The following letter from Colonel Harrison to the President of Congress gives an account of the action on Chatterton's Hill.

"White Plains, 29 October, 1776.

"SIR,

"The situation of our affairs not permitting his Excellency to write himself, I have it in charge to inform you, that yesterday morning about ten o'clock the enemy appeared in several large columns in our front, and, from their first movements, seemed as if they meant to attack us there. However, halting for a little time, their main body filed off to our right, and presently began a most severe and incessant cannonade at a part of our troops, who had taken post on a hill, with a view of throwing up some lines. At

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the same time they advanced in two divisions, and, after a smart engagement for about a quarter of an hour, obliged our men to give way. Our loss is not certainly known; but, from conjecture, is between four and five hundred in killed, wounded, and missing. What theirs was, we have not heard.

"After gaining the hill (upon which they are intrenching), and leaving a sufficient number of men and artillery to prevent our repossessing it, they proceeded to advance by our left; and, as far as I can discover, their posts or encampments now form nearly a semicircle. It is evident their design is to get in our rear according to their original plan. Every measure is taking to prevent them; but the removal of our baggage is attended with infinite difficulty and delays. Our post, from its situation, is not so advantageous as could be wished, and was only intended as temporary and occasional, till the stores belonging to the army, which had been deposited here, could be removed. The enemy coming on so suddenly has distressed us much. They are now close at hand, and most probably will in a little time commence their second attack; we expect it every hour; perhaps it is beginning; I have just heard the report of some cannon. I have the honor to be, &c.

"ROBERT H. HARRISON."

Gordon states, that the number mentioned above as having been killed, wounded, and missing proved to be much too large. A body of militia, who ran away from the light-horse, and were supposed to be missing, were afterwards found. According to a report of the Board of War, only thirty privates and four officers were taken prisoners. — *History*, Vol. II. p. 343. Chief Justice Marshall says, that "the loss on both sides was supposed to have been about equal; that of the Americans was between three and four hundred killed, wounded, and taken." — *Life of Washington*, Vol. II. p. 505. This number must be understood as including the militia who fled, and were erroneously supposed to be taken; for General Howe, in his report of the action, writes, "the killed, wounded, and prisoners taken from the enemy in the course of this day, are *said to be* not less than two hundred and fifty." — *Letter to Lord George Germain, November 30th.*

The Delaware regiment, commanded by Colonel Haslet, was in the action on Chatterton's Hill. He thus describes what came under his own observation, in a letter to General Rodney, dated November 12th.

"I received his Excellency's orders to take possession of the

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hill beyond our lines, and the command of the militia regiment there posted; which was done. We had not been many minutes on the ground, when the cannonade began, and the second shot wounded a militia-man in the thigh; upon which the whole regiment broke and fled immediately, and were not rallied without much difficulty. Soon afterwards General McDougall's brigade took post behind us. Some of our officers expressed much apprehension from the fire of our friends so posted. On my application to the General, he ordered us to the right, formed his own brigade on the left, and ordered Brooks's Massachusetts militia still further to the right behind a stone fence.

"The troops being thus disposed, I went up to the top of the hill, in front of our troops, accompanied by Major McDonough, to reconnoitre the enemy. I plainly perceived them marching to the White Plain in eight columns, and stop in the wheat-fields a considerable time. I saw their general officers on horseback assemble in council, and soon their whole body face about, and in one continued column march to the hill opposite to our right. I then applied to General McDougall again to vary his disposition, and advised him to order my regiment farther onward, and replace it with Colonel Smallwood's, or order the Colonel forward, for there was no dependence to be placed on the militia. The latter measure was adopted. On my seeing the enemy's march to the Creek begin in a column of their main body, and urging the necessity of bringing our field-pieces immediately forward to bear upon them, the General ordered one, and that so poorly appointed, that myself was forced to assist in dragging it along the rear of the regiment. While so employed a cannon-ball struck the carriage, and scattered the shot about, a wad of tow blazing in the middle. The artillery-men fled. One alone was prevailed upon to tread out the blaze and collect the shot. The few that returned made not more than two discharges, when they retreated with the field-piece.

"At this time the Maryland battalion was warmly engaged, and the enemy ascending the hill. The cannonade from twelve or fifteen pieces, well served, kept up a continued peal of reiterated thunder. The militia regiment behind the fence fled in confusion, without more than a random, scattering fire. Colonel Smallwood in a quarter of an hour afterwards gave way also. The rest of General McDougall's brigade never came up to the scene of action. Part of the first three Delaware companies also retreated in disorder, but not till after several were wounded and killed. The left of the regiment took post behind a fence on the top of the hill with most

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of the officers, and twice repulsed the light troops and horse of the enemy; but seeing ourselves deserted on all hands, and the continued column of the enemy advancing, we also retired. Covering the retreat of our party, and forming at the foot of the hill, we marched into camp in the rear of the body sent to reinforce us."

On the night of the 31st of October, General Washington evacuated the camp, which he had hitherto occupied at White Plains, and removed the army to a very strong position on the hills, about two miles in the rear of his first encampment, where he caused new works of defence to be thrown up.

No. VII. pp. 168, 198.

GENERAL HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

Head-Quarters, 11 November, 1776.

SIR,

The enclosed letter having been intercepted and brought to me, I am happy to return it, without the least attempt being made to discover any part of the contents. I was yesterday favored with your answer to my letter of the 8th, and am perfectly satisfied with your assertion, that the delay in the exchange of prisoners has not arisen from any disregard to the agreement on your part, but from the neglect of those, to whose care the arrangement of them has been entrusted. Give me leave at the same time to observe, that this measure, naturally so desirable to the parties concerned, must be in a great degree interrupted, if a general exchange should remain an object, to the prejudice of prisoners near at hand, who upon the shortest notice of their ranks or numbers might be relieved by an equality of those in my possession; and, as I cannot foresee any objection to an exchange taking place immediately, so far as may be conveniently effected, and as often afterwards as the prisoners more remote shall arrive, I am willing to hope for your concurrence in promoting the same.

You are pleased to say, the usage of war does not allow of an immediate exchange of prisoners; which I can by no means agree to, the contrary being ever the custom of armies, between which an exchange of prisoners has been determined, as far as the nature of business may permit. And in respect to stragglers from your army, since you have been pleased to say, I might have set you

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examples of returning them, I am to inform you, that no persons under that description have fallen into my hands. Such men as have been lately taken in arms, as well as those who have been longer in confinement, are solely detained for the arrival of your prisoners, in consequence of assurances received from you on that subject.

I most undoubtedly could point out several instances, wherein the King's officers have not been treated with the lenity and humanity they had a right to expect; but I am unwilling to dwell upon a subject of complaint, which I am fully satisfied will, as far as it lies in your power, be removed. I send, at the request of Major Stuart, the enclosed letter, and am, with due regard, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. HOWE.

No. VIII. p. 223.

CAPTURE OF GENERAL LEE.

The conduct of General Lee, in neglecting to obey the orders of the Commander-in-chief, after they had been earnestly and repeatedly communicated, has drawn upon him the just and unqualified censure of historians. Nor do his letters, written at the time, afford any facts in justification of the course he chose to pursue. On the contrary, they aggravate the offence of disobedience by showing, that he had ulterior designs of his own, which he was disposed to prosecute without the concurrence of the Commander-in-chief. From his letters, in reply to those of General Washington, connected with the issue of events, it will be easy to judge of his motives and his anticipations.

"Camp, 24 November, 1776.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"I have received your orders and shall endeavour to put them in execution, but question much whether I shall be able to carry with me any considerable number; not so much from a want of zeal in the men, as from their wretched condition with respect to shoes, stockings, and blankets, which the present bad weather renders more intolerable. I sent Heath orders to transport two thousand men across the river, apprize the General, and wait for further

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orders; but that great man (as I might have expected) intrenched himself within the letter of his instructions, and refused to part with a single file, though I undertook to replace them with a part of my own. I should march this day with Glover's brigade, but have just received intelligence that Rogers's corps, a part of the light-horse, and another brigade lie in so exposed a situation, as to present us the fairest opportunity of carrying them off. If we succeed, it will have a great effect, and amply compensate for two days' delay.

"I am, dear General, yours most sincerely,

"CHARLES LEE."

In this first letter General Lee's plan is obvious. He intended to cross the river with as large a force as possible, act in a separate command, and fall upon the rear or flank of the enemy, as opportunities might offer. For this purpose he requested General Heath to send two thousand troops over the river. General Heath not only declined complying with the request, but refused to obey an order, alleging that his instructions were explicit, to employ his whole force in defence of the Highlands. (Heath's *Memoirs*, pp. 88 – 98.) Lee was displeased and vexed at this decision, and undertook to order two regiments away himself, but finally desisted on more mature reflection. General Washington approved the conduct of General Heath, as it was not his intention that any part of the troops under his command should be withdrawn. General Lee had lingered on the east side of the river, with the hope of obtaining the detachment he desired, till he received another letter from General Washington, to which he replied as follows.

"Peekskill, 30 November, 1776.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"I received yours last night, dated the 27th from Newark. You complain of my not being in motion sooner. I do assure you, that I have done all in my power, and shall explain my difficulties when we both have leisure. I did not succeed with Rogers, and merely owing to the timidity or caution of the enemy, who contracted themselves into a compact body very suddenly. I am in hopes I shall be able to render you more service than if I had moved sooner. I think I shall enter the province of Jersey with four thousand firm and willing troops, who will make a very important diversion; had I stirred sooner, I should have only led an inferior number of unwilling.

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"The day after to-morrow we shall pass the river, when I should be glad to receive your instructions; but I could wish you would bind me as little as possible; not from any opinion, I do assure you, of my own parts, but from a persuasion that detached generals cannot have too great latitude, unless they are very incompetent indeed. Adieu, my dear Sir.

"Yours, most affectionately,

"CHARLES LEE."

"P. S. I have just been speaking with General Heath, the strictness of whose instructions a good deal distresses me. I could have replaced the force I requested, by men who are able to do stationary duty, but not to make expeditious marches. My numbers will in consequence be fewer than I promised."

Having thus failed in procuring a reinforcement from General Heath, he passed over the river with his own troops on the 2d and 3d of December, and proceeded slowly on his march.

"Haverstraw, 4 December, 1776.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"I have received your pressing letter, since which, intelligence was sent to me, that you had quitted Brunswic, so that it is impossible to know where I can join you. But, although I should not be able to join you at all, the service which I can render you will, I hope, be full as efficacious. The northern army has already advanced nearer to Morristown than I am. I shall put myself at their head to-morrow. We shall, upon the whole, compose an army of five thousand good troops in spirits. I should imagine, dear General, that it may be of service to communicate this to the troops immediately under your command. It may encourage them, and startle the enemy. In fact their confidence must be risen to a prodigious height, if they pursue you, with so formidable a body hanging on their flank and rear.

"I shall clothe my people at the expense of the Tories, which has a doubly good effect. It puts them in spirits and comfort, and is a correction of the iniquities of the foes of liberty. It is paltry to think of our personal affairs, when the whole is at stake; but I entreat you to order some of your suite to take out of the way of danger my favorite mare, which is at that Wilson's, three miles beyond Princeton.

"I am, dear General, yours,

"CHARLES LEE."

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Here we perceive, that, so far from complying with the pressing orders of General Washington, he suggests doubts whether he shall be able to join the main army at all, since it has removed from Brunswic, and there was an uncertainty where it could be found. The whole tenor of the letter indicates a purpose to act separately, not only with his own troops, but with those coming from the northward, of which he was about to take the command, as the oldest major-general, although Washington had given him no such instructions, but on the contrary expected those troops to march forward and join him as soon as possible.

"Morristown, 8 December, 1776.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"Colonel Humpton will give you a return of the militia already assembled, and of those (if it can be called a return) expected. The whole will, as it is said, make by to-morrow morning one thousand. My corps, that passed the North River, will amount (for we are considerably diminished) to seven and twenty hundred. In fact, our army may be estimated at four thousand. If I was not taught to think that your army was considerably reinforced, I should immediately join you; but as I am assured you are very strong, I should imagine we can make a better impression by hanging on their rear; for which purpose a good post at Chatham seems the best calculated. It is at a happy distance from Newark, Elizabethtown, Woodbridge, and Boundbrook; it will annoy, distract, and consequently weaken them.

"As to your Excellency's idea of surprising Brunswic, the post I propose taking offers the greatest probability of success; but we are so ill shod and destitute of light-horse, that this desultory war is hard upon the poor soldiers. But I must do them the justice to say, that they have noble spirits, and will, I have no doubt, render great service to their country. God bless you, General.

"Yours, most sincerely,

"CHARLES LEE."

"Chatham, 8 December, 1776.

"DEAR GENERAL,

"Major Hoops has just delivered to me your Excellency's letter. I am extremely shocked to hear that your force is so inadequate to the necessity of your situation, as I had been taught to think you had been considerably reinforced. Your last letters proposing a plan of surprises and forced marches convinced me, that there was no danger of your being obliged to pass the Delaware; in con-

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sequence of which proposals, I have put myself in a position the most convenient to coöperate with you, by attacking their rear. I cannot persuade myself, that Philadelphia is their object at present, as it is almost certain that their whole troops lately embarked have directed their course to the eastern provinces; for Spencer writes me word, that half of them have passed the Sound, and the other half turned the southwestern end of Long Island and steered eastward. I detached Colonel Varnum and Monsieur Malmedy to take the direction of the Rhode Island troops, who are without even the figure of a general. It will be difficult I am afraid to join you, but cannot I do you more service by attacking their rear? I shall look about me to-morrow, and inform you further.

"I am, dear General, yours,

"CHARLES LEE."

The following note was addressed to General Washington, and is in the handwriting of General Lee, although he speaks of himself in the third person.

"Morristown, 11 December, 1776.

"We have three thousand men here at present, but they are so ill shod, that we have been obliged to halt these two days for want of shoes. Seven regiments of Gates's corps are on their march, but where they actually are is not certain. General Lee has sent two officers this day, one to inform him where the Delaware can be crossed above Trenton, the other to examine the road towards Burlington. As General Lee thinks he can without great risk cross the great Brunswic postroad, and by a forced night's march make his way to the ferry below Burlington, boats should be sent up from Philadelphia to receive him; but this scheme he only proposes, if the head of the enemy's column actually pass the river. The militia in this part of the province seem sanguine. If they could be sure of an army remaining amongst them, I believe they would raise a very considerable number."

This was the last communication received by General Washington from General Lee. It would seem as if his idea of a junction was more distant than ever, for he talks of a project of moving towards Burlington, directly across the cordon of the enemy from Brunswic to Trenton; a project entirely at variance with all the views of the Commander-in-chief. General Lee was captured on the morning of the 13th, two days after the above note was written.

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What would have been his future movements must now be left to conjecture. He passed the night of the 12th, with a small guard, at a house called White's Tavern, near Baskenridge, and about three miles from the main body of his troops. A Tory had watched his motions, and given intelligence to Colonel Harcourt, who commanded a patrolling party of the enemy then in that neighbourhood, and who came suddenly upon General Lee, seized him, and carried him off a prisoner to Brunswic. Wilkinson was present and witnessed this adventure, and has described it in his *Memoirs*, Vol. I. pp. 102 – 106.

A circumstance attended these events, of which it seems proper to speak in connexion with them. It has been seen in the foregoing pages of this work, that a very close intimacy and confidence subsisted between General Washington and Colonel Joseph Reed, at this time Adjutant-General of the army. The loss of Fort Washington, and the successes of the enemy in every quarter, had alarmed Colonel Reed, and on the 21st of November he wrote from Hackinsac a desponding letter to General Lee, highly complimentary to that officer, and lamenting the indecision, which had appeared in other officers, (alluding pointedly to the Commander-in-chief,) and which he believed had been the cause of many disasters. The letter has since been printed. (See *Memoirs of Charles Lee*, p. 227.) A day or two after it was written, Colonel Reed left the army on business that called him away, and the letters that came to camp directed to him were opened by the Commander-in-chief, as they were supposed to be official and to require immediate attention. Among others came General Lee's answer to the abovementioned letter from Colonel Reed, which is here inserted.

"Camp, 24 November, 1776.

"MY DEAR REED,

"I received your most obliging, flattering letter. I lament with you, that fatal indecision of mind, which, in war, is a much greater disqualification than stupidity, or even want of personal courage. Accident may put a decisive blunderer in the right, but eternal defeat and miscarriage must attend the man of the best parts, if cursed with indecision.

"The General commands in so pressing a manner, as almost to amount to an order, to bring over the Continental troops under my command; which recommendation, or order, throws me into the greatest dilemma, from several considerations. Part of the troops are so ill furnished with shoes and stockings, blankets, &c., that

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they must inevitably perish in this wretched weather. Part of them are to be dismissed on Saturday next, and this part is the best accoutred for service.

"What shelter we are to find on the other side of the river is a serious consideration; but these considerations should not sway me. My reason for not having marched already is, that we have just received intelligence that Rogers's corps, the light-horse, part of the Highlanders, and another brigade lie in so exposed a situation, as to give the fairest opportunity of being carried off. I should have attempted it last night, but the rain was too violent; and, when our pieces are wet, you know our troops are *hors du combat*. This night I hope will be better. If we succeed, we shall be well compensated for the delay. We shall likewise be able in our return to clear the country of all the articles wanted by the enemy. In every view, therefore, the expedition must answer.

"I have just received a most flattering letter from the Governor of New Orleans. He gives me the title of "*General de los Estados Unidos Americanos*," which is a tolerable step towards declaring himself our ally in positive terms. The substance is, that he is sensible of the vast advantages, which must result from the separation to his master and nation; that he cannot positively enter into a regular system of commerce without consulting his master; but, in the mean time, he will render us all the service in his power. I only wait myself for this business I mention of Rogers and Company being over. I shall then fly to you; for, to confess a truth, I really think our Chief will do better with me than without me. I am, &c.

"CHARLES LEE."

It may be imagined, that the tenor of this epistle was not very acceptable to the Commander-in-chief, and that it was moreover likely to raise in his mind suspicions of the friendly intentions of the person to whom it was directed. He forwarded it to Colonel Reed, with the following letter.

"Brunswic, 30 November, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,

"The enclosed was put into my hands by an express from White Plains. Having no idea of its being a private letter, much less suspecting the tendency of the correspondence, I opened it, as I had done all other letters to you, from the same place and Peekskill, upon the business of your office, as I conceived and found

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them to be. This, as it is the truth, must be my excuse for seeing the contents of a letter, which neither inclination nor intention would have prompted me to.

"I thank you for the trouble and fatigue you have undergone in your journey to Burlington, and sincerely wish that your labors may be crowned with the desired success. With best respects to Mrs. Reed, I am, dear Sir, &c.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

From this period there was an apparent coldness between the two friends, but not such as to interrupt their intercourse; although, as Colonel Reed soon retired from the army, their interchange of sentiments was chiefly in writing. The following correspondence contains all that needs further to be known, and is too honorable to both parties to be suppressed.

COLONEL REED TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"Philadelphia, 8 March, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,

"The Congress having adjourned to this city, I suppose they will soon come to some resolution respecting the command of the horse. As ambition for military command is not my ruling passion, I make no doubt any preference given to any other person will be founded on such merit, as will give satisfaction to every one. I am sure it will give it to me, as I love my country too well, and have too deep a stake in the game, not to wish it well played. I am very sensible that some obstructions have been thrown in the way by the gentlemen from New England; but I do not much wonder it should be so, and therefore do not blame them. My anxiety to reform the terrible abuses, which prevailed among us, often led me farther perhaps than was prudent, especially if I had sought popularity or promotion, which I did not. The good of the service was my object. Of this I may have misapprehended the means and mode.

"At all events, my dear Sir, I flatter myself nothing will arise from the determination of Congress, that will give you any dissatisfaction. I am too inconsiderable to be the subject of the slightest difficulty between the first civil and military powers. And my countrymen here are partial enough to think me deserving of offices of honor and profit, which I should not have presumed to solicit; so that should things not go exactly in the line you have pointed out, perhaps the result may be better on the whole than you expect.

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"I could have wished to have one hour of private conversation with you on the subject of a letter, written to me by General Lee before his captivity. I deferred it in hopes of obtaining from him the letter, to which his was an answer. I fear, from what we hear, that he will be sent to England, and of course there will be little probability of my obtaining it. While he stays in America I cannot give up my hopes, and in the mean time I most solemnly assure you, that you would see nothing in it inconsistent with that respect and affection, which I have and ever shall bear to your person and character. My pressing him most earnestly to join you as soon as possible, and mentioning that Mount Washington was taken before any decision was had respecting it, led to expressions and an answer, which must have been disapproved by you, and which I was far from expecting. I had rather multiply instances than repeat assurances of my respect and attachment. No man in America, my dear General, more truly and ardently wishes your honor, happiness, and success, or would more exert himself to promote them. I say more upon this occasion, from a probability that we shall not renew our military connexion, and therefore can have no other interest than that of securing your esteem free from all selfish principles.

"At the same time I make you a most sincere tender of my services, at any time of particular difficulty, if you think they will lighten any part of the heavy burthen, which you are called by Providence to support, and which I doubt not will eventually elevate you to a height of honor and glory, that a few happy men only in all ages are called to possess. General Cadwalader does not accept his appointment, which I am sorry for. It is a real loss to the service.

"I am, with unfeigned respect and regard, dear Sir, &c.

"JOSEPH REED."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO COLONEL REED.

"Middlebrook, 29 May, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,

"Congress having empowered me, by a resolve transmitted this morning, to assign one of the generals, already appointed, to the command of the light-horse, I mean that you should act in that line, if agreeable to yourself; and I wish you in such case to repair to camp as soon as you can.

"I am, dear Sir, with great esteem, &c.

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

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COLONEL REED TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

"Philadelphia, 4 June, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been honored with yours of the 29th of May, and take the first opportunity to express my sincere and grateful acknowledgments of the favor intended me by the command of the horse. The difficulties, which have arisen in Congress, the time, manner, and circumstances under which the appointment as general officer has been made, so as to enable me to profit by your favor, added to the great inconvenience my family and private affairs must now sustain by my unexpected absence, the expense of equipment and difficulty of it in any short time, have been such discouragements to my accepting the commission, that I am advising with my friends what is the proper line of duty and honor. I should have declined it, without any hesitation, if I had not been restrained by those principles of respect and attachment to you, from which, whatever my enemies have insinuated, upon my honor I have never deviated.

"I can readily acknowledge that a zeal for this service, and anxiety to correct the horrid abuses, which prevailed in our army, and a hope of introducing honesty and courage at least among our troops, betrayed me into a warmth of expression, which, considering with whom I had to do, was imprudent though not unjust. I blame myself for opposing a torrent, which was so irresistible and prevailing, and regret that I did not avail myself of your example of patience and silence under evils, which I fear are too deeply rooted to admit of a total cure. The abuse and calumny, which, with equal cowardice and baseness, some persons have bestowed, would have given me little pain, if I did not apprehend that it had lessened me in your friendship and esteem. In this part I confess I have received the severest wound; for I am sure you are too just and discerning, to suffer the unguarded expressions of another person to obliterate the proofs I had given of a sincere, disinterested attachment to your person and fame, since you first favored me with your regard.

"I am sensible, my dear Sir, how difficult it is to regain lost friendship; but the consciousness of never having justly forfeited yours, and the hope that it may be in my power fully to convince you of it, are some consolation for an event, which I never think of but with the greatest concern. In the mean time, my dear General, let me entreat you to judge of me by realities, not by appearances,

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and believe that I never entertained or expressed a sentiment incompatible with that regard I professed for your person and character, and which, whether I shall be so happy as to possess your future good opinion or not, I shall carry to my grave with me.

"A late perusal of the letters, you honored me with at Cambridge and New York last year, afforded me a melancholy pleasure. I cannot help acknowledging myself deeply affected, on a comparison with those which I have since received. I should not, my dear Sir, have trespassed on your time and patience at this juncture so long, but that a former letter upon this subject I fear has miscarried; and, whatever may be my future destination and course of life, I could not support the reflection of being thought ungrateful and insincere to a friendship, which was equally my pride and my pleasure. May God Almighty crown your virtue, my dear and much respected General, with deserved success, and make your life as happy and honorable to yourself, as it has been useful to your country.

"Believe me, with the most unfeigned regard and respect, dear Sir, your most obliged and affectionate humble servant,

"JOSEPH REED."

GENERAL WASHINGTON TO COLONEL REED.

"Middlebrook, 14 June, 1777.

"DEAR SIR,

"Your favor of the 4th was given me by Joseph Arrowsmith just as Mr. Peters informed me, that he was about to set out for Philadelphia. I could not resist the inclination, however, of detaining him long enough to write you a short letter, to thank you, as I do most sincerely, for the friendly and affectionate sentiments contained in yours of the above date towards me, and to assure you, that I am perfectly convinced of the sincerity of them. True it is, I felt myself hurt by a certain letter, which appeared at that time to be the echo of one from you. I was hurt, not because I thought my judgment wronged by the expressions contained in it, but because the same sentiments were not communicated immediately to myself.

"The favorable manner in which your opinions, upon all occasions, had been received, the impression they made, and the unreserved manner in which I wished and required them to be given, entitled me, I thought, to your advice upon any point in which I appeared to be wanting. To meet with any thing, then, that carried with it a complexion of withholding that advice from me, and censuring

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my conduct to another, was such an argument of disingenuity, that I was not a little mortified at it. However, I am perfectly satisfied, that matters were not as they appeared from the letter alluded to.

"I sincerely wish that you may accept the appointment of Congress, and the post I am desirous of placing you in, and must beg to be favored with an answer immediately upon the subject, as the service will not admit of delay. A general officer in that department would not only take off a great deal of trouble from me, but be a means of bringing those regiments into order and service with much more facility, than it is in my power, divided as my attention is, possibly to do. Mr. Peters's waiting obliges me to conclude, and I do it with great truth, dear Sir, your obedient and affectionate servant,

"GEORGE WASHINGTON."

It may be added, that these explanations appear to have been satisfactory on both sides. Mutual confidence was restored, and it was General Washington's custom afterwards to consult Colonel Reed on trying and important occasions, particularly in the movements of the army while within the limits of Pennsylvania.

No. IX. p. 249.

BATTLE OF TRENTON.

As soon as Washington had been compelled to cross the Delaware, and General Howe's army had been arrested by that barrier, it was natural that the thoughts of every one should be turned towards a scheme of attacking the enemy, in some of their positions on the other side of the river. That such a movement was contemplated by Washington, as early as the 14th of December, only six days after his retreat over the Delaware, is proved by his letter to Governor Trumbull, written on that day; in which he says, alluding to the troops coming from the northward with General Gates, "They may, in conjunction with my present force, and that under General Lee, enable us to attempt a stroke upon the forces of the enemy, who lie a good deal scattered, and to all appearance in a state of security; a lucky blow in this quarter would be fatal to them, and

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would most certainly rouse the spirits of the people, which are quite sunk by our late misfortunes." General Greene also wrote in a similar manner, a week afterwards, to the Governor of Rhode Island. "We are now," he says, "on the west side of the Delaware. Our force is small when collected together; but, small as it is, I hope we shall give the enemy a stroke in a few days. Should fortune favor the attack, perhaps it may put a stop to General Howe's progress." — *MS. Letter, December 21st.*

These passages show, that the project of an attack was conceived immediately after crossing the Delaware, and was deliberately matured by the Commander-in-chief and his principal officers, till it was carried into effect. The following letter from Colonel Reed to General Washington, written the day after the one above cited from General Greene, probably expressed the sentiments of a large portion of the officers then in the army.

"Bristol, 22 December, 1776.

"DEAR SIR,

"Pomroy, whom I sent by your order to go to Amboy, and so through the Jerseys and round by Princeton to you, returned to Burlington yesterday. He went to South Amboy, but was not able to get over; upon which he came up to Brunswic, passed on to Princeton, and was prevented from going to Pennington, upon which he returned to Burlington by way of Cranberry.

"His intelligence is, that he saw no troops, baggage-wagons, or artillery going to New York, except about eight wagons, which he understood had the baggage of some of the light-horse, who had been relieved and were going into quarters. At Cranberry he saw sixteen wagons going down to South Amboy for the baggage of about five hundred men, who were to quarter about Cranberry, being enlisted forces, commanded by one Lawrence. At Brunswic he saw four pieces of cannon; the number of men he could not learn, but they did not exceed six or eight hundred. Princeton, he says, was called head-quarters, and there he saw a very considerable body of troops coming out of the College, meeting-house, and other places, where they quartered. He understood they were settled in their winter-quarters, and had given over further operations till the spring. In Burlington county he found them scattered through all the farmers' houses, eight, ten, twelve, and fifteen in a house, and rambling over the whole country.

"Colonel Griffin has advanced up the Jerseys with six hundred men as far as Mount Holly, within seven miles of their head-quarters

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at the Black Horse. He has written over here for two pieces of artillery, and two or three hundred volunteers, as he expected an attack very soon. The spirits of the militia here are very high; they are all for supporting him. Colonel Cadwalader and the gentlemen here all agree, that they should be indulged. We can either give him a strong reinforcement, or make a separate attack; the latter bids fairest for producing the greatest and best effects. It is therefore determined to make all possible preparation to-day; and, no event happening to change our measures, the main body here will cross the river to-morrow morning, and attack their post between this and the Black Horse, proceeding from thence either to the Black Horse, or the Square, where about two hundred men are posted, as things shall turn out with Griffin. If they should not attack Griffin as he expects, it is probable both our parties may advance to the Black Horse, should success attend the intermediate attempt. If they should collect their force and march against Griffin, our attack will have the best effects in preventing their sending troops on that errand, or breaking up their quarters and coming in upon their rear, which we must endeavour to do in order to free Griffin.

"We are all of opinion, my dear General, that something must be attempted to revive our expiring credit, give our cause some degree of reputation, and prevent a total depreciation of the Continental money, which is coming on very fast; that even a failure cannot be more fatal, than to remain in our present situation; in short, some enterprise must be undertaken in our present circumstances, or we must give up the cause. In a little time the Continental army will be dissolved. The militia must be taken before their spirits and patience are exhausted; and the scattered, divided state of the enemy affords us a fair opportunity of trying what our men will do, when called to an offensive attack. Will it not be possible, my dear General, for your troops, or such part of them as can act with advantage, to make a diversion, or something more, at or about Trenton? The greater the alarm, the more likely success will attend the attacks. If we could possess ourselves again of New Jersey, or any considerable part of it, the effects would be greater than if we had never left it.

"Allow me to hope, that you will consult your own good judgment and spirit, and not let the goodness of your heart subject you to the influence of opinions from men in every respect your inferiors. Something must be attempted before the sixty days expire, which the commissioners have allowed; for, however many affect

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to despise it, it is evident that a very serious attention is paid to it, and I am confident that, unless some more favorable appearance attends our arms and cause before that time, a very great number of the militia officers here will follow the example of those of Jersey, and take benefit from it. I will not disguise my own sentiments, that our cause is desperate and hopeless, if we do not take the opportunity of the collection of troops, at present, to strike some stroke. Our affairs are hasting fast to ruin, if we do not retrieve them by some happy event. Delay with us is now equal to a total defeat. Be not deceived, my dear General, with small, flattering appearances; we must not suffer ourselves to be lulled into security and inaction, because the enemy does not cross the river. It is but a reprieve; the execution is the more certain, for I am very clear that they can and will cross the river, in spite of any opposition we can give them.

"Pardon the freedom I have used. The love of my country, a wife and four children in the enemy's hands, the respect and attachment I have to you, the ruin and poverty that must attend me and thousands of others, will plead my excuse for so much freedom. I am, with the greatest respect and regard, dear Sir,

"Your obedient and affectionate humble servant,

"JOSEPH REED."

It would seem, that General Greene had his full share in lending efficient counsel on the present occasion, as well as during the previous part of the campaign. In the year 1786, Alexander Hamilton pronounced a *Eulogium* on General Greene, before the Cincinnati Society of New York, from which is taken the following extract.

"As long as the measures, which conducted us safely through the first and most critical stages of the war, shall be remembered with approbation; as long as the enterprises of Trenton and Princeton shall be regarded as the dawnings of that bright day, which afterwards broke forth with such resplendent lustre; as long as the almost magic operations of the remainder of that remarkable winter, distinguished not more by these events, than by the extraordinary spectacle of a powerful army straitened within narrow limits by the phantom of a military force, and never permitted to transgress those limits with impunity, in which skill supplied the place of means, and disposition was the substitute for an army; — as long, I say, as these operations shall continue to be the object of wonder, so long ought the name of Greene to be revered by a grateful country. To attribute to him a portion of the praise, which is due as well to the formation as to the execution of the plans, that effected these

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important ends, can be no derogation from that wisdom and magnanimity, which knew how to select and embrace counsels worthy of being pursued."

Another extract from General Greene's letter, from which a quotation is made above, will show his views of public measures and prospects at this crisis. "I think," said he, "notwithstanding the general disaffection of a certain order of people, that the army will fill up. Should that be the case, nothing is to be feared. Short enlistments have been in a great measure the source of all the misfortunes that we labor under, though but few to what one at first expected. Congress, in the infancy of politics, could not be brought to believe many serious truths. By attending to speculative principles, rather than to those of real life, their maxims of war have been founded in folly. However, experience ripens judgment, and enables us to correct many an error in business, that at first we could not conceive of; and I do not doubt, that Congress in time will be as able politicians in military matters, as they are in civil government."

The writer of the Life of Robert Morris, contained in the fifth volume of the "*Biography of the Signers of the Declaration of Independence*," has committed a remarkable mistake in regard to the agency of that distinguished patriot in the battle of Trenton. After describing the manner in which Mr. Morris obtained a sum of money in specie, which General Washington had pressed him to supply for the purpose of procuring intelligence of the situation and designs of the enemy, the writer adds, that it "enabled General Washington to gain the signal victory over the hireling Hessians at Trenton, which not only diminished the numerical force of the enemy, but had the necessary and important results of animating the spirit of patriotism, and checking the hopes and predictions of our enemies. Such was the instrumentality of Robert Morris in the victory of Trenton; and it may be truly remarked, that, although his own brows were unadorned with the laurels of the warrior, it was his hand, which crowned the heroes who triumphed on that day." This statement is more rhetorical than accurate. The money was not sent, nor applied for, till *four days after* the battle of Trenton, as will appear by the date of the following letter.

"Philadelphia, 30 December, 1776.

"SIR,

"I have just received your favor of this day, and sent to General Putnam to detain the express, until I collected the hard money you

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want, which you may depend shall be sent in one specie or other with this letter, and a list thereof shall be enclosed herein.

"I had long since parted with very considerable sums of hard money to Congress; and therefore must collect from others, and, as matters now stand, it is no easy thing. I mean to borrow silver, and promise payment in gold, and will then collect the gold in the best manner I can. Whilst on this subject, let me inform you that there is upwards of twenty thousand dollars in silver at Ticonderoga. They have no particular use for it, and I think you might as well send a party to bring it away, and lodge it in a safe place convenient for any purposes for which it may hereafter be wanted. Whatever I can do, shall be done for the good of the service.

"I am, dear Sir, &c.

"ROBERT MORRIS."

By the list enclosed, the money sent was specified to be four hundred and ten Spanish dollars, two English crowns, half a French crown, and ten English shillings and a half.

The above error, in regard to the time of furnishing the supply, though it introduces confusion into history, does not diminish the value of the act on the part of Mr. Morris; and this is greatly enhanced by another circumstance of a similar kind, but of more weighty importance, which immediately followed. It will be remembered, that the period of service of nearly all the eastern troops expired on the last day of the year. Washington had then just recrossed the Delaware a second time. He prevailed on those troops to remain six weeks longer, by promising to each soldier a bounty of ten dollars. The military chest was not in a condition to permit him to fulfil this promise. On the 31st of December he stated the particulars in a letter to Robert Morris, who replied the next morning; —

"I was honored with your favor of yesterday, by Mr. Howell, late last night; and, ever solicitous to comply with your requisitions, I am up very early this morning to despatch a supply of fifty thousand dollars to your Excellency. You will receive that sum with this letter; but it will not be got away so early as I could wish, for none concerned in this movement except myself are up. I shall rouse them immediately. It gives me great pleasure, that you have engaged the troops to continue; and if further occasional supplies of money are necessary, you may depend on my exertions either in a public or private capacity." — *MS. Letter, January 1st*, 1777.

Such instances of the patriotism and zeal of Robert Morris

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were not uncommon. Others of a like nature often occurred during the war, and on more than one occasion his private purse and credit were employed to relieve the public exigencies, with a liberality and nobleness of spirit, which must for ever entitle him to the gratitude of his countrymen, and to the praise of every friend of liberty.

No. X. p. 252.

PRISONERS.

In the number of prisoners taken during the campaign of 1776, the British had considerably the advantage of the Americans. The following is a summary of the returns made out by the British commissary-general of prisoners, and forwarded by General Howe to General Washington.

TABLE.

When and where taken.	Commissioned Officers.							Staff.								Privates.
	Generals.	Colonels.	Lieut.-Colonels.	Majors.	Captains.	Lieutenants.	Ensigns.	Chaplains.	Adjutants.	Quartermasters.	Surgeons.	Commissaries.	Engineers.	Wagon-masters.	Volunteers.	
Long Island, August 27th, .	3	3	4	3	18	43	11	.	1	.	3	.	.	.	2	1,006
Island of N. York, Sept. 15th, 16th,	.	1	2	3	4	7	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	354
White Plains, October 28th, .	.	.	.	.	1	2	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	35
Fort Washington, November 16th,	.	4	4	5	46	107	31	1	2	2	5	2	1	1	.	2,607
Fort Lee, November 20th,	.	.	.	.	.	1	1	.	.	1	3	.	.	.	.	99
Total, . . .	3	8	10	11	69	160	43	1	3	4	11	2	1	1	2	4,101

From these returns it appears, that the number of American officers taken during the campaign was 304; staff 25; privates 4,101; total 4,430.

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The number of persons missing from the British ranks, whom General Howe reported, on the 21st of September, as supposed to be prisoners with the Americans, specifying each regiment to which they belonged, was 43 officers, and 848 privates; making a total of 891.

This return he acknowledged to be imperfect, since in some instances he could not ascertain the number contained in a regiment before the captures from it were made, as in the case of the troops taken in the transports entering Boston harbour. It is probable, however, that the return did not vary much from the truth. But it does not embrace 73 prisoners, taken by Commodore Hopkins at Providence Island, and a few others taken at different posts. There were afterwards taken, also, 36 at Mamaronec, and 918 at Trenton, and others in various skirmishes, whose numbers are not specified.

The aggregate of the above numbers of British prisoners is 1,918, leaving a balance of 2,512 against the Americans. This amount should probably be reduced by two or three hundred, on account of prisoners taken in small parties, of which no returns have been preserved. General Howe's returns specify the whole number actually in his hands.

The Canada prisoners formed a separate item, and belonged in part to the preceding year. Sir Guy Carleton sent to New York fifty-one commissioned officers, and three hundred and seventy-three non-commissioned officers and privates, making in all 424, who were discharged on their parole, and landed by order of General Howe at Elizabethtown. These were the troops captured at Quebec and the Three Rivers.

For these prisoners the Americans had more than an equivalent.

Ethan Allen and Arnold had taken at Ticonderoga fifty, at Crown Point thirteen, and at St. John's twenty; total 83.

At Chamblee the number of British and Canadians taken was one major, two captains, three lieutenants, three staff, eighty-three privates; total 92.

At St. John's, by capitulation to General Montgomery, one major, ten captains, eighteen lieutenants, five ensigns, five staff, British, and thirty-seven Canadian officers of various ranks, about four hundred and fifty privates of the regulars, and one hundred Canadian volunteers; total 626.

At the capture of General Prescott and the fleet near Sorel, one general, one major, five captains, one lieutenant, two ensigns, two staff, one hundred and twenty-nine privates; total 141.

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SUMMARY.

Taken at Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and St. John's	83
" " Chamblee	92
" " St. John's	626
" in the fleet near Sorel	141
Total	942

Hence the whole number of British prisoners taken at the posts on Lake Champlain and in Canada was 942, making an excess of 518 in favor of the Americans.

The general results, at the end of the year 1776, were as follows.

American prisoners in the possession of the British, taken by the army under General Howe,	4,430
Taken in Canada, and sent home on parole by General Carleton	424
Total	4,854

British prisoners in the possession of the Americans, captured from General Howe's army	1,918
Taken at Ticonderoga, Crown Point, and in Canada	942
Total	2,860

The difference between the two aggregates is 1,994 in favor of the British.

The above statements have been drawn from the best returns, that I have been able to find; and, although they are not supposed to be precisely accurate, yet they approximate very near to the truth.

The prisoners taken at the Cedars are not here included. According to a return of the British commissary of prisoners, they consisted of two majors, nine captains, twenty subalterns, and four hundred privates, being in all 431. They had been released upon an agreement, that the same number of British prisoners should be exchanged for them. Congress refused to ratify this agreement, and the subject was still in dispute.

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No. XI. p. 254.

WASHINGTON'S DICTATORIAL POWERS.

Notwithstanding the extreme jealousy, which had hitherto prevailed with most of the members of Congress, in regard to the danger of a military ascendency, they were constrained in the present alarming aspect of affairs to invest General Washington with very extensive powers. In relation to the army, these powers constituted him in all respects a *Dictator*, according to the Roman sense of that term, as will appear by the proceedings of Congress.

"*December 27th*, 1776. This Congress, having maturely considered the present crisis; and having perfect reliance on the wisdom, vigor, and uprightness of General Washington, do hereby

"Resolve, That General Washington shall be, and he is hereby, vested with full, ample, and complete powers to raise and collect together, in the most speedy and effectual manner, from any or all of these United States, sixteen battalions of infantry, in addition to those already voted by Congress; to appoint officers for the said battalions of infantry; to raise, officer, and equip three thousand light-horse, three regiments of artillery, and a corps of engineers, and to establish their pay; to apply to any of the States for such aid of the militia as he shall judge necessary; to form such magazines of provisions, and in such places, as he shall think proper; to displace and appoint all officers under the rank of brigadier-general, and to fill up all vacancies in every other department in the American army; to take, wherever he may be, whatever he may want for the use of the army, if the inhabitants will not sell it, allowing a reasonable price for the same; to arrest and confine persons who refuse to take the Continental currency, or are otherwise disaffected to the American cause; and return to the States, of which they are citizens, their names, and the nature of their offences, together with the witnesses to prove them.

"That the foregoing powers be vested in General Washington, for and during the term of six months from the date hereof, unless sooner determined by Congress."

The following letter was sent by Congress, as a circular, to the governor of each of the States, accompanied by the above resolve.

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"Baltimore, 30 December, 1776.

"SIR,

"Ever attentive to the security of civil liberty, Congress would not have consented to the vesting of such powers in the military department, as those which the enclosed resolves convey to the Continental Commander-in-chief, if the situation of public affairs did not require at this crisis a decision and vigor, which distance and numbers deny to assemblies far removed from each other, and from the immediate seat of war.

"The strength and progress of the enemy, joined to prospects of considerable reinforcements, have rendered it not only necessary that the American forces should be augmented beyond what Congress had heretofore designed, but that they should be brought into the field with all possible expedition. These considerations induce Congress to request in the most earnest manner, that the fullest influence of your State may be exerted to aid such levies as the General shall direct, in consequence of the powers now given him; and that your quota of battalions, formerly fixed, may be completed and ordered to head-quarters with all the despatch, that an ardent desire to secure the public happiness can dictate.

"I have the honor to be, &c.

"JOHN HANCOCK, *President.*"

With whatever powers he might be entrusted by his fellow-citizens, it was a maxim with Washington never to exercise them any farther than the exigency of the case demanded. His only wish was, that every important act should be performed, which the public good required; and neither ambition nor self-love excited in him a desire to be the agent, if the object could be attained through the means of others. After he had been invested with the above dictatorial office, the Council of Safety of New York apologized to him for certain measures they had taken, in regard to the troops of that State, which they afterwards discovered were an encroachment upon his authority. Washington replied; "I should be unhappy in the belief, that any part of my letter to you could be construed into the slightest hint, that you wish to interfere in the military line. Heaven knows that I greatly want the aid of every good man, and that there are not such enviable pleasures attending my situation, as to make me too jealous of its prerogatives. Rather than complaint of your late efforts in the military way, you deserve the thanks of us all, and I feel myself happy in this opportunity of returning you mine in the greatest truth and sincerity."

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To no one, who has been conspicuous in history, could the words of Ennius, as quoted by Cicero in illustration of the character of Fabius Maximus, be more appropriately applied than to Washington.

"Unus qui nobis cunctando restituit rem;
Non ponebat enim rumores ante salutem;
Ergo magisque magisque viri nunc gloria claret."

The resolves of Congress, conferring the above powers, were transmitted to Washington by the Committee, who remained in Philadelphia when the Congress adjourned to Baltimore, namely, Robert Morris, Clymer, and Walton. In their letter they said;— "We find by these resolves, that your Excellency's hands will be strengthened with very ample powers; and a new reformation of the army seems to have its origin therein. Happy it is for this country, that the General of their forces can safely be entrusted with the most unlimited power, and neither personal security, liberty, nor property, be in the least degree endangered thereby."— *MS. Letter, December 31st.*

No. XII. p. 275.

LORD HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

New York, 17 January, 1777.

SIR,

The letter I received from you of the 13th instant is, in matter and expression, so different from the liberal turn of sentiment I had been habituated to expect on every occasion of personal intercourse or correspondence with you, that I scarce know how to believe that the contents and the name I read at the bottom are parts of the same letter.

It surprises me much, that the idle and unnatural report of Captain Gamble could meet with any credit. That one, two, or three of the prisoners have been seen laid out the same morning by the sides of the churches in which they were necessarily confined, I believe may be true; as I have heard that many more of those unhappy people have died in a night, when sickness prevailed much amongst them. But can common sense, Sir, suppose us insensible to the dangers of infection, that would attend the neglect

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of timely care to bury the dead of every description, in the town we inhabit? Attention to preserve the lives of those men, whom we esteem the misled subjects of the King, is a duty as binding on us, where we are able from circumstances to execute it with effect, as any you can plead from the interest you profess in their welfare.

With regard to the treatment of the prisoners in my particular department, I think it necessary to say, that they were confined with the more general liberty of the prison-ship, until a successful attempt was made by some to make their escape. The rest were then restrained within such narrow limits, as left the more commanding parts of the ship in possession of the guard. The provisions given to them are exactly the same in nature and quality, and are furnished from amongst those, served to the seamen of the ship in which I am embarked. The proportion of each species is exactly the same, as that oftentimes deemed sufficient for the support of the seaman under the fatigues of his profession, and which is at no time exceeded to the soldier when embarked in the fleet.

It may be necessary to observe, that no payment is demanded for the subsistence of the prisoners in the fleet. And, as to the want of cleanliness amongst them (the only part of Mr. Gamble's account that I can find has any foundation in truth), the state of the weather not admitting of the usual expedient for preserving cleanliness by washing the ship, it has been owing to the indolence of the prisoners, that the other customary methods have been neglected. They must however be compelled to the practice of them for their own benefit.

As to medical assistance, the prisoners have had the constant attendance of an American surgeon, confined with them, who has been supplied on his application with medicines from the King's stores; and the physician of the fleet has visited and recommended the proper treatment of the sick amongst them. Seven, I find, is the number that have died, of about five hundred that have been suffering, according to Mr. Gamble, in the manner he asserts.

No representation has been ever made to me by the prisoners of such pretended ill treatment; though they have sent many letters soliciting their enlargement, which was at that time deemed unseasonable. Nor were any complaints of the kind made to the captain of my ship, when on board the prison-ship to communicate my intentions to set at liberty, in separate corps, the natives of different provinces, in compassion to their unavoidable sufferings in the confined situation of this fleet and army.

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The principal persons in authority in Connecticut had lately denied their assent to my proposition by an appointed officer for an exchange of so many natives against such British prisoners as were confined in that province; but no distinction was therefore made to their prejudice, in the favor I meant to show to those of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, where the proposition had been accepted. Fifty-four prisoners of different classes, not taken in arms, were landed in consequence in Connecticut from one vessel last month, and fifty from another. Thirty-eight had been a few days before landed in Pennsylvania, and about thirty more set at liberty in this province, toward the end of the same month. Amongst the number of the last, I find the name of William Gamble, the author, as I conclude, of the narrative, which has been made the subject of your letter. I must confess I expected other proofs of Mr. Gamble's veracity, if I am thought to have no claim to a just relation of all the circumstances he was acquainted with, from his gratitude, for the earliest attention that could be shown to him in his late situation, by an unconditional release from his captivity.

As I abhor every imputation of wanton cruelty in multiplying the miseries of the wretched, or of treating them with needless severity, I have taken the trouble to state these several facts. But in respect to the language you seem pleased to suppose me accustomed to hold, and certain retaliations you have willed (a sentiment, which, if it had a precedent for imitation, I should not believe had been adopted by you, Sir, on less credible authority than your own assurance), it is incumbent on me to say, I am well content, that you should act therein as you think fit. The innocent at my disposal will not have any severities to apprehend from me on that account.

The King's officers, who have been lately released in the different provinces where they were prisoners, are almost general in their report of the close confinement and other indignities they have suffered. I have not addressed any remonstrance to you, Sir, thereon, as I did not suppose it was done with your concurrence; but was solely to be ascribed to the disorder of the times, and the unhappy enmity that such destructive contests never fail to create. On this foundation, I think differently of the treatment of the British prisoners in many of the provinces, from the report made to you. But I dwell not upon it, as I should find no justification in those examples for the acts of inhumanity pretended to have been experienced by Mr. Gamble. The two captains of merchant-ships, Bell and Getshius, for whose release you interest yourself, having

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been included in the thirty prisoners set at liberty with Mr. Gamble, I have no return to demand on their account.

Mr. Josiah, in whose behalf you wrote to me some months since, was lately released at your particular desire, as I was told, in place of Mr. Ball, according to the tenor of the papers enclosed. Of the crew of the armed boat taken in Savannah River, Messrs. Brown, Kirk, Watson, and Lee only are now remaining in the prison-ship. It happens, that all the four are under the same circumstance of illness. As soon as they are reëstablished, I shall very readily concur in the exchange of them. And any exceeding that number, which it may be thought proper to release to me at the same time from Georgia, shall be returned, if acceptable, from amongst the natives of the other provinces. I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

HOWE.

No. XIII. p. 277.

LETTERS FROM GENERAL HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

New York, 23 January, 1777.

SIR,

Your several letters of the 1st, 6th, 12th, 17th, and 29th of December have been received. I have not troubled you with answers to them, as the exchanges to which they relate, so far as the military line is concerned, have been regularly made.

The conditions respecting the exchange of prisoners not being complied with on your part, in the manner I had a right to expect, from the agreement subsisting between us, and from your repeated declarations in answer to my letters on that subject, I propose to send an officer of rank to you to confer upon the future mode of exchange and subsistence, if it meets with your approbation; this expedient, appearing to me effectual for settling all differences, will, I hope, be the means of preventing a repetition of the improper terms in which your letter of the 13th instant is expressed, and founded upon the grossest misrepresentations. I shall not make any further comment upon it, than to assure you, that your threats of retaliating upon the innocent such punishment, as may be decreed in the circumstances of Mr. Lee by the laws of his

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country, will not divert me from my duty in any respect; at the same time you may rest satisfied, that the proceedings against him will not be precipitated; and I trust that in this, or in any other event during the course of my command, you will not have just cause to accuse me of inhumanity, prejudice, or passion.

Although I cannot contradict the account you have been pleased to transmit of the cruel treatment of Lieutenant Yates, I can aver my abhorrence of the barbarity therein set forth, and am satisfied, that the officers under my command are equally inclined to discourage such behaviour, and to prevent it in every possible degree; but the heat of action will sometimes produce instances, that are only to be lamented. Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott is the officer I have appointed to negotiate respecting the prisoners; he will accordingly wait your answer to this at Brunswic, which you will be pleased to address to Lord Cornwallis commanding at that place.

I am, with due respect, &c.

W. HOWE.

Head-Quarters, at Brunswic, 27 February, 1777.

SIR,

Some days having elapsed since the conference between Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott and Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison without hearing from you for the further prosecution of the business relative to prisoners of war, I am to trouble you with my request to have a second meeting at the same, or at any other place you shall appoint, and to desire you will vest Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison with proper powers for reducing to the form of a regular cartel the agreement already concluded between us, for the exchange of prisoners.

With much reluctance I am to remonstrate against the treatment of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell of the seventy-first regiment, who, instead of being exchanged, to which he has an indubitable right, is, I am credibly informed, put into close confinement at Concord in the Massachusetts Bay, contrary to the tenor of his parole, which is binding on both parties. Sergeant McConkie and Sergeant Andrews are also, I hear, still in close confinement in that province. These grievances requiring your immediate interposition, I am hopeful you will give them the speediest redress, and that all prisoners of war at present in your possession will be returned without further delay; their detention being contrary to the agreement subsisting between us. I am, Sir, &c.

W. HOWE.

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GENERAL WASHINGTON TO GENERAL HOWE.

Head-Quarters, Morristown, 3 March, 1777.

SIR,

On the 1st instant I received the favor of your letter of the 27th ultimo. I had heard the day before of Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell's confinement, and I wrote to him and the President of the Council of the Massachusetts State respecting it; and I trust his situation will be made more agreeable, it being my wish, that every reasonable indulgence and act of humanity should be done to those, whom the fortune of war has or may put into our hands.

Lieutenant-Colonel Harrison will meet Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott on Monday the 10th instant, at twelve o'clock, at the place of their former interview, when he will be vested with powers to negotiate the business proposed. I am, Sir, &c.

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

No. XIV. p. 386.

LETTER FROM GENERAL HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

New York, 21 April, 1777.

SIR,

I have received your letter of the 9th instant, concerning the requisition of Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott, a copy of which came enclosed. Though I observe that officer has meant to insist very strongly on the justice of the claim for the return of prisoners in your possession, which was one of the objects of his appointment, I do not see reason to suspect, that any personal incivility was intended by the terms in which his opinion is expressed.

Without entering into a needless discussion of the candor or illiberality of the sentiments, on which your arguments are founded; yet, since you are pleased to assert, that "the usage of your prisoners was such as could not be justified, that this was proclaimed by the concurrent testimony of all who came out, that their appearance sanctioned the assertion, and that melancholy experience, in the speedy death of a large part of them, stamped it with infallible certainty;" these, I say, being what you are pleased to assume as facts, I cannot omit making some observations upon them.

It might perhaps suit the policy of those, who persist in every

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expedient to cherish the popular delusion, that the released prisoners should complain of ill usage; or their captivity might really form a grievous comparison with the state they were in before they were persuaded to encounter the vicissitudes of war. But if their sufferings were as great as you think yourself authorized to assert, a dispassionate consideration of the following indisputable and notorious facts will point out the cause to which they are to be in a great measure ascribed.

All the prisoners were confined in the most airy buildings, and on board the largest transports in the fleet, which were the very healthiest places of reception, that could possibly be provided for them. They were supplied with the same provisions, both in quantity and quality, as were allowed to the King's troops not on service, some accidental instances excepted, wherein however the omission, when known, was immediately remedied. Near one half of the whole number of prisoners, whose diseases appeared to require peculiar care as well as separation from the rest, were at different times received into the British hospitals, and their own surgeons without restrictions supplied with medicines for the remaining sick, until it was discovered, that they hesitated not to dispose of large quantities by private sale.

From this short state of facts, it is evident, that your prisoners were provided with proper habitations, sufficient and wholesome food, and medicines. Nor do I know of any comfort or assistance, compatible with their situation as prisoners, of which they were in want, excepting clothing; the relief of their distress in this and the article of money, of which you were repeatedly advised, and they had claim to receive from your care, was neglected or refused, while they were furnished with every other necessary I was in a situation to supply.

To what cause the speedy death of a large part of them is to be attributed, I cannot determine; but your own experience will suggest to you, whether the army under your command, in the course of the last campaign, was free from such calamitous mortality, though assisted with refreshments from all parts of the surrounding provinces. It is insinuated, that I might have released the prisoners before any of the ill consequences of their detention had taken place. I am obliged to say, the event at least appears to have proved the caution with which I ought to have adopted that expedient. The prisoners were ready to be delivered up, waiting only for your proceeding in the exchange, which you had proposed and I agreed to.

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I admit, that able men are not to be required by the party, who, contrary to the laws of humanity, through design, or even neglect of reasonable and practicable care, shall have caused the debility of the prisoners he shall have to offer for exchange; but the argument is not applicable to me in the present instance. I might finally put this question, How is the cause of debility in prisoners to be ascertained? But as we differ so much in the principle upon which your objections are framed, as I think those objections are unsupported by precedent or equity, and that your adherence to them would be a direct and determined violation of the agreement, it becomes unnecessary for me to add more, than to call upon you to fulfil the agreement for returning the prisoners demanded by Lieutenant-Colonel Walcott.

With respect to the case of Mr. Lee, now professed to be a principal motive for your refusal to continue the exchange of prisoners, it is comprehended, I must insist, under my general and original exception to persons in his circumstances.

With due respect, I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. HOWE.

No. XV. p. 438.

LETTERS FROM GENERAL HOWE TO GENERAL WASHINGTON.

New York, 22 May, 1777.

SIR,

Not having received an answer to my letter of the 21st of April, I am to request your final decision upon the demand I then made of the prisoners in your possession, both officers and soldiers, in exchange for those I have returned, and for your determination respecting the prisoners now here, that I may make my arrangements accordingly.

It is with concern I receive frequent accounts of the ill treatment still exercised upon Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, which I had reason to flatter myself you would have prevented. He has, it is true, been taken out of a common dungeon, where he had been confined with a degree of rigor, that the most atrocious crimes would not have justified; but he is still kept in the jailer's house,

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exposed to daily insult from the deluded populace. This usage being repugnant to every sentiment of humanity, and highly unworthy of the character you profess, I am compelled to repeat my complaint against it, and to claim immediate redress to this much injured gentleman. With due respect, I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. HOWE.

New York, 5 June, 1777.

SIR,

So many days have elapsed since my letter to you of the 22d of May was despatched without an answer, and lest by any accident it should not have got to your hands, I am induced to send a duplicate thereof, and to press my request for your final decision upon the demands therein contained. With due respect, I am, Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

W. HOWE.

END OF VOL. IV.

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